

The Listener

Published by the British Broadcasting Corporation

Vol. X

Wednesday, 1 November 1933

No. 251

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The Commodity Dollar

A Brief Explanation by Professor T. E. G. GREGORY

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DO not think I need elaborate the point that we should not be hearing so much about inflation in some form or another as a remedy for America's troubles if it were not for the fact that the Recovery Programme has not succeeded in doing what it was intended to do. Or, rather, it has only succeeded in part, and this partial success is offset by growing divergencies of interest between farmers and industrialists, industrialists and workers, and between the producers as a whole and the general public as consumers. These divergencies are beginning to loom larger in the public eye than they did even a month ago, and as the crux of the situation lies in the fact that they are an expression ultimately of the trend of various sets of prices, it is not surprising that the problem of prices, especially the future course of prices, should now be the main preoccupation of the American Government.

Opinion in the States is sharply divided on the whole problem of the future of the price level. There is the Sound Money school, which wants to fix definitely the gold content of the dollar, but which is not adverse to combining this with easy money conditions in the money market, to be achieved by the purchase of securities on a large scale by the Central Bank. As a matter of fact, if the dollar were revalued, the excess gold reserves of the Central Bank would become so great (owing to the fact that each ounce of gold would back a larger number of

American dollars) that an enormous increase in the total volume of purchasing power could take place without difficulty, though no one can say how quickly this increase would be translated into rising prices or how high the price level would go. But the Sound Money school has not been successful in winning over the President.

Then there is the Greenback school—politically very important since it can count upon a great deal of support in Congress and outside it—which wants to get prices up by the simple expedient of printing uncovered notes on the analogy of the Civil War issues. Technically, printing notes first and then paying the redundant ones into the banks where they would act as additional reserves, does not differ fundamentally from increasing the reserves first by Central Bank operations and letting the public have as many notes as they may happen to want by drawing them out of the banks. But psychologically there is an enormous difference, and I have no doubt in my own mind that if the President were to be won over to this very crude method of solving the problem, the effect on prices would be immediate and very marked. But the Greenback school has not succeeded in convincing the President either.

The third school, which is headed by Professor Warren, and which has found warm backing from the influential New York group which calls itself the Committee for the Nation, wishes to combine the advantage of having some kind of connection between the dollar and gold, with the

further advantages of raising prices in the first instance and keeping them stable in the second. So far as one can judge, this is the policy which the Administration proposes to try out. Let me try to explain the technical difficulties as simply as I can.

So far as the link with gold is concerned, the matter is simple. So long as the Government fixes a buying price for gold, say 30 dollars per ounce, no one in America will sell gold for less than this to anyone else, and if the Government is prepared to sell gold for, say, 30½ dollars per ounce, no one will buy gold for more than this, so long as the Government stock lasts. Now the essential difference between this system and the orthodox gold standard is simply that it is proposed to fix the price of gold from time to time, instead of fixing it once and for all. And further, the idea behind this fluctuating price for gold in terms of dollars is this: under the ordinary gold standard the gold price of the currency and the currency price of gold do not move; but other prices, that is the commodity price of dollars, and the dollar prices of commodities, do move. The intention under this scheme is to hold commodity prices constant in terms of dollars, but to let the price of gold vary, and to let the price of gold vary in such a way that if general prices show any signs of coming down, the amount of dollars per ounce of gold will go up, whilst if general prices show any signs of going up, the amount of dollars per ounce of gold will go down. In the first case, that encourages people to sell gold to the Government, which buys it with dollars, so that there are more of these and thus prices are forced up again. In the second case, people are discouraged from selling gold, the supply of new purchasing power declines, and with it declines the rapidity with which prices are rising.

There are obviously two very important issues involved. The first is the immediately urgent one—if prices are to be stabilised at some point, what ought it to be, and how do you get to that point? Now the aim of the Administration is to get back to the 1926 price level, and the difficulty is that at this moment some prices are much nearer to the 1926 price level than others, though present prices on the average are still below 1926. Industrial prices are rising, but farm prices, though they have also risen from their lowest level, have recently been falling, and it is very difficult to see how, even if you get back to the 1926 average, you can arrange that industrial commodity prices and farm prices shall stand in precisely the same relation to one another as they did seven years ago. But if this cannot be done, the farmers will remain as dissatisfied as they now are, and, quite apart from that, how are you going to get prices up? That has been the difficulty all along, and the adoption of the commodity dollar does not solve it in any way. Even if you fix the price of gold very much higher than it is at this moment, that will not mean necessarily restoring the 1926 price level for things in general.

Supposing the first and most formidable obstacle to be overcome, the important question is, of course, will the commodity dollar work? It certainly will not work merely because it is tied up to gold in the way explained; that is merely a method of making it look more respectable in the eyes of those who want some sort of connection with gold. Essentially, the proposal is to set up a managed currency, the objective of which is stability of prices. But whether that is worth having is another matter on which opinions may very legitimately differ.

The Modern Columbus—II

The Tropical Beauty of Florida

By S. P. B. MAIS

BEFORE leaving Kentucky I drove 400 miles to see the Mammoth Caves. Mammoth is the right word. You can, if you feel like it, walk for 150 miles on five different levels, and during that time you will pass eight cataracts, three rivers, two lakes and one sea. As the usual limit of a walk for Americans is about 150 yards I don't suppose many people have walked the whole length, and as, in any case, like all mad dogs and Englishmen, I prefer walking under the midday sun, I contented myself with a route tactfully described in the guide-book as suitable for cripples, the aged, and those pressed for time. This was a short stroll of about four miles—the longest, and certainly the strangest I have yet taken in America.

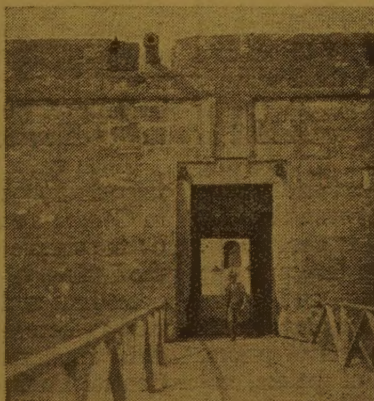
Clothed in convicts' overalls and with a miner's lamp in our hands, we descended into the black depths and crossed the rivers of Styx and Lethe, looked down the bottomless pit, and we rowed with bowed heads along the green river with the clammy vaults of limestone close upon us, and ghostly sounds ringing through the endless hollow caverns. Even the drips made a ghostly sound. We were then 360 feet below the surface. We wandered through vast halls, so lofty that I couldn't see the roof, even when the guide threw a flare to illuminate. I squeezed through a sinuous snaky passage well-named 'Fat-man's misery', as narrow as our stiles in Derbyshire, and clambered up from the bowels of the earth on a corkscrew ladder where I was made to realise the full meaning of not having enough room to breathe, and the feeling of claustrophobia. But what impressed me more than anything as we squeezed our way along these narrow paths was the sight of wicked-looking, death-like

brown crickets which made no noise, and white transparent crawfish, born without eyes, which darted away in the water as we approached. The temperature was oppressively hot.

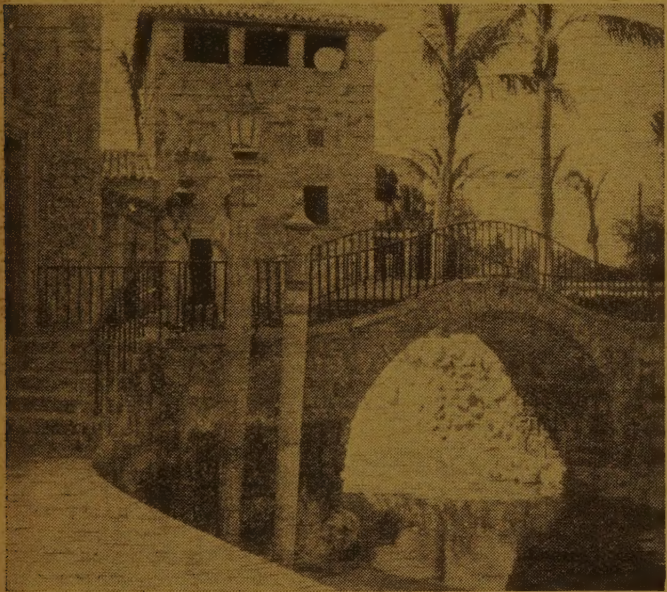
Silence—and Sound

On the way back from this trip, when we were in the middle of a forest, my companions in the car seemed uncertain whether we were more likely to be hugged by a bear or attacked by wild cats—and there I learnt the full meaning of the words 'forest silence'. I do not often wish for more noise, but I did then. On the other hand, during my 100-mile train journey through Georgia the next day I had enough noise to last me the rest of my life. This was a very different train from the 'George Washington'. All through the night a child screamed, the engine played alternatively on its bell and its hooter, chains clanged. Golly! how they jolt with every start and stop, these trains! My next-door neighbour snored, and finally that ghastly sound, which has to be heard to be believed, roused me to look at a village hut on fire.

I spent the next day looking out under grey skies and a never-ending succession of cotton fields. The plant looks very like a white rose bush. Then the scenery changed into dense groves of bright green-leaved sugar cane and tall pecan trees. What few houses there were, were all grey wooden one-roomed cabins raised off the ground on bricks. Every time the train stopped I made a dash for air by descending on to the side of the line, only to be driven back by hosts of mosquitoes. At one of these wayside stations a coloured girl in pink cotton frock and large golden ear-rings was sauntering along



The gateway of the Spanish Fort at St. Augustine, Florida



Sights of Florida

Above: Grape-fruit orchard at St. Petersburg
Below: Coral gables at the Venetian Pool, Miami

Above: Hurricane-swept road on the way to Miami
Below: Old slave-market in St. Augustine

Photographs: J. Dearden Holmes

the railway track, and two or three coloured boys in enormous floppy straw hats, light blue shirts and dark blue mechanics' overalls were lolling about on trolleys. Nobody seemed to have any work to do.

The train was more or less empty, except for one man who, by a happy coincidence, also came from Derby, and we whiled away the time talking about our respective homes in Derby and Derbyshire, until at 8.40 p.m., after a journey of twenty-two hours, we crossed the Swannee River and stepped into an entirely new world at Jacksonville, Florida. My first impression was of a magnificent railway station almost comparable with that at Washington. Then I emerged into a perfectly lit city of fine skyscrapers. In the middle of the streets were lines of palm trees, olive trees and oaks, under which rested shirt-sleeved men and girls in light summer frocks, making an indescribable scene. In a few minutes I was looking down on the spot from the windows of a luxurious hotel bedroom, with fans going over my head, trying to keep cool. This at about 9 o'clock on an October night! It was my first experience of the tropics, and for a few hours I felt as though I were in an over-heated greenhouse.

Heat-Wave Comfort

On the following morning I was taken by the manager of the hotel to a very imposing store, and entirely refitted. I quickly found the extreme unsuitability of the thinnest of English clothes in Florida, and I very quickly discarded my English vests, shirts and socks, and stood once more in comfort, and, moreover, for the first time well dressed in a six-guinea suit. The sun came out, the breeze got up, and I felt completely

acclimatised. Then I was presented by the Mayor of the City with a bathing dress. (I don't know whether Blackpool or Brighton are taking note of this.) And then I was driven to that glorious road lined with palms and olives and oaks covered with a graceful fleece of grey Spanish moss which looks exactly like a silky old man's beard, past swamps, and right down to Jacksonville Beach; surely one of the grandest in the world. Thirty miles long and 650 feet wide, and entirely composed of fine coloured sands as hard as concrete. Motor-cars were dashing up and down at various speeds, just as at Daytona, on the side of the great Atlantic. I saw a sandpiper run quickly along the edge of the waves, with its feet dripping, and I saw it catch a good-sized fish in its beak, and then fly away, its great underwing spread out just like the undercarriage of a Zeppelin.

There were stone and wooden houses near the sand dunes, but we did not get the full tropical effect until we drove on through the jungle towards St. Augustine where an alligator turned across the road just in front of the car. We stopped and took its photograph while the driver fanned it with a palm leaf. A small boy almost fell over in excitement, exclaiming, 'Gee whiz! You folks stopping around here? I'm going to get a gun and shoot 'un'. He then rushed off and disappeared into the blue. That boy was a real Huckleberry Finn as near as doesn't matter. I keep on meeting Huckleberry Finns in this country. That alligator certainly showed a desire to have anything within his reach. He finally moved, and as I suppose the pace of an alligator is about equal to galloping horses I felt it was time to move too. Shortly after leaving that alligator we passed, in open order, a file of men with guns, looking for other game to kill. There are bears, deer, panthers and rattle-

snakes, and all sorts of amusing things hidden in the scrub. Mile after mile we passed nothing but this palmetto scrub covering the sand dunes on the ocean side, and more low-lying swamps on the land side, when suddenly in the distance I saw the spires of San Antonio. The scene over the flat green jungle reminded me of the spires of Oxford. San Antonio is one of the most interesting towns in America, for it was here that the Spaniard, Ponce de Leon, landed in 1513, and, the day being the Feast of Flowers, he called the land of his discovery 'Florida'. Fifty-two years later, on August 28, 1565, another Spaniard, Menéndez, also landed here and established the first permanent settlement in the United States. Soon afterwards it was looted and burned by Sir Francis Drake. The whole State of Florida was bought by the United States in 1821 from Spain for five million dollars. There is a grey square sixteenth-century Spanish fort which happens to be the only ancient Spanish fort the country possesses. It is built of a stone made of thousands of small shells, and this fort which guards the mouth of the river is just the kind that makes me think of *Beau Geste*—with its dungeons and a low embattled parapet looking out over a land of palms. From the low sea-wall men and women sat pulling fish out of the water as fast as they could throw a line.

Every white house displays notices claiming to be the oldest house in the States—one, a Spanish inn, claimed the grand-daughter of Sir Walter Scott, but whether as client or owner, I don't know. I contented myself with inspecting some of these 'oldest' houses, and was amazed to find them filled with museum pieces which had nothing to do with San Antonio and little to recommend them but age. But I wished at their wells, and looked at their banana trees, and even accepted money-leaves to make me rich. Everywhere grew the scarlet hibiscus which all the Hawaiian girls use to decorate their hair, and pink oleander. I saw a convent white with brilliant red shutters and covered with purple and yellow creeper. In the shade of the market square, where slaves used to be sold, coloured men lay lazily watching white men throw horse-shoes about 20 yards over a painted iron post.

It was just as though one were in Spain, Minorca or Morocco. Porpoises rolled in and out of the estuary, and shrimp boats darted to and fro on the south side of the river. I saw an alligator and ostrich farm with six thousand alligators, varying in weight and size from those weighing a few ounces at a week old, to those weighing a thousand tons and thousands of years old. The young ones are lively and wasp-like in colour, and they croak; the middle-aged ones hiss, and the old ones lie with jowls wide open and as still as logs of wood. Apparently they only breathe twice in twenty-four hours—or is it years? They were only separated from us by a wooden fence about 2 feet high, and the guide told me that if he failed to keep them supplied with water they would be out in a flash, and even as he spoke a few took ungainly but distinctly menacing efforts to reach him, but after he had spoken to them they sank down exhausted. 'They know my voice', he said. I saw as many rattlesnakes as I want to see, and I saw a man curing the skin of one 12 feet long. I was warned not to offer pearls to the ostriches; I photographed a squirrel, and I caught a chameleon and watched him turn blue as he ran over my suit.

Where Speed Records are Made

Then I went along an absolutely deserted coast-road with rows of palms on one side and the well-known jungle on the other, to Daytona Beach, where Sir Malcolm Campbell makes his speed records. This is a place of old hostels and fine healthy homes, with a lagoon as well as the sea, and on three sides tropical jungle, but everywhere it reminded me of the seashore at Blackpool and the coast of Cumberland near Seascale. For some distance, however, further down this Atlantic coast lies Palm Beach and Miami, where money has been prodigally spent to beautify artificially what is beautiful naturally. Those who go

there spend the winter basking in the warm sunshine, and the road which runs from there to Miami is one of the finest in the world, and extends up the coast for 2,500 miles. I drove up along this road on my return to Jacksonville. Part of it runs alongside the old Spanish trail. It is surely the longest highway in America. Whilst on it I had the luck to strike the most amazing sunset; after the sun had descended into its bath of pure gold, a massive dark-grey blanket of cloud tinged with flame unfolded itself to the south, and from this rose vast pillars of snowy whiteness. The sky overhead turned slowly from turquoise blue to blush rose, and then imperceptibly to scarlet pinkness, and the scarlet into flame. Darkness fell quickly. There was an intermittent sparkle here and there of fire-flies amongst the trees, then there was the olive green and red lights of the railroad signals, and the sweeping arc of light scanning the skies for aeroplanes. Dark red lights marked the railroad crossings, and the yellow lights which warned us of the coming of a train. Giant buses hurtled by in a blaze of red and green lights, and once half-a-dozen huge black forms swung slowly over our heads out to sea—'pelicans', explained our driver.

So at length we came back to Jacksonville, and my first view of it since I crossed the St. John's River, and this view of it impressed me more than my first view from the railway station. Jacksonville is the kind of city I like best, for it is not only busy but beautiful, and proves that industrial efficiency can go hand in hand with loveliness. It is not only a great seaport, but also a widely visited resort, as I discovered the next morning when I was taken in a boat up and down the waterfront.

I saw the industrial quarter, the boats laden with grape fruit bound for Liverpool, the Clyde boats bound for New York, clipper ships

from the south, and craft of every kind, from rowing boats with coloured men sitting fishing to the white steam ferry boats and the grey grim revenue cutters of the United States navy. And on the surface of the black water floated thousands and thousands of isolated mauve hyacinths. Below the Dixieland Highway Bridge which spans the river stands the residential quarter, with many fine houses of Spanish, English and American architecture standing in banks of shady palms and with splendid smooth lawns which stretch down to the water's edge. The river is here about four miles wide, and makes a perfect lagoon for sailing boats and even landing for seaplanes.

A Land for Gourmets

I did not know what good food was until I came to the United States, and the further south I go the better it seems to get. Last night I dined in a tiny log hut at Maryport, near the river, built by the French Huguenots under Jean Ribaut in 1562, and my hostess, who, it is true, graduated in domestic science at the University of Georgia, produced the most delicate assortment of vegetables I can remember, notably, avocado pear, raisins, marshmallow, and hominy, a sort of Indian corn-in-the-cob.

The more I see of these Southern girls, the more I wonder what they do with the ugly ones. Now what have I learnt about America this week? The people will never use a knife where a fork will do—I find I am reduced to helplessness in trying to spread my butter or my guava jelly with a spoon. They never swear. They call the letter 'z' zee. They pronounce Miami 'Miam-a' and Cincinnati, 'Cincinnati-a'. Until I arrived they had never seen an Englishman who didn't smoke or put Worcester Sauce on everything. Their inability to say 'yes' seems due to nervous exhaustion. You cannot get a meal at a country hotel after 8 o'clock. They just don't know the meaning of the word 'noise'. They love anything strange. They like heavy candelabra. They don't know the meaning of fear. They are accustomed to travel not only vast distances in the flesh but also travel vast distances in the mind; I listened to girls in the local High School yesterday letting themselves go about 'Lycidas' and Longfellow; and everyone I meet manages to attain a splendid local patriotism, with a well-informed and well-balanced attitude towards international politics.



Alligator farm in North Florida

Scientific Research and Social Needs—IV

How Science Looks After Our Clothes

By JULIAN HUXLEY

CLOTHING, like building, is for the most part traditional. The only section of it in which, as in frame-construction buildings of steel or reinforced concrete, there is no link with traditional methods, is the artificial silk industry. In some cases, old methods have persisted into the present century. While visiting the Professor of Leather Chemistry at Leeds University, I saw hanging on his wall a photograph of a tan-pit at Falaise in Normandy taken some thirty years ago. The pit is known to have been a going

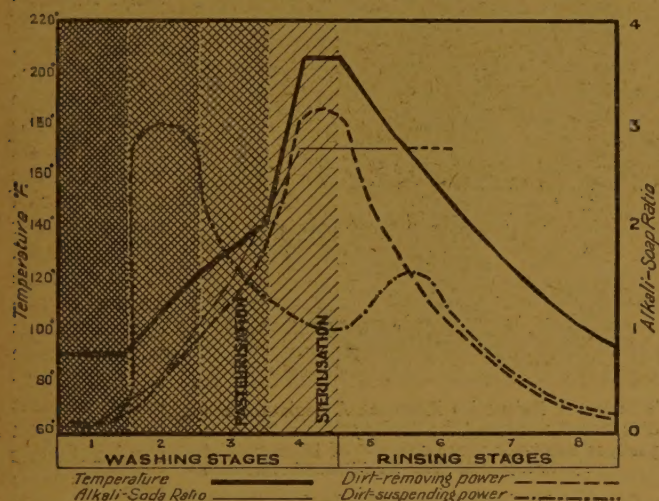


Diagram showing the influence of the various stages in the washing process

The progressive removal of dirt is indicated by the shading. Note the ingenious manner in which the opposing effects of dirt-removing power and dirt-suspending power have been overcome

By courtesy of the British Launderers' Research Association

concern in the eleventh century, and had been operated unchanged till the photograph was taken. But while the making of fabrics out of vegetable fibres like cotton or flax and animal fibres like wool comes down to us from antiquity, the modern methods of achieving this end have been radically transformed. A Roman building foreman would have understood the work of a building foreman today. But a Roman woman expert with her spinning wheel would not be able to recognise spinning when she saw it going on in a Lancashire mill. Thanks to power, in the shape of water-power, steam and electricity, and to mechanical invention, in the shape of astonishing machines, the tradition of textile manufacture has been changed much more than the tradition of building. None the less, the industry still operates almost entirely with traditional materials, and for the most part by means of methods which, when not traditional in the narrower sense, have been improved by invention rather than by science. There have been thousands of years of experience behind the traditional practices, and enormous financial premiums on successful inventions, so that it might at first sight be thought that there would be little room for new improvements based on the method of science. It is my business here to discuss whether this is so or not.

In the past there have been, of course, very real advances in textile processes which have been due to science. I will only take one example—bleaching. How many people realise that up till the late eighteenth century, to bleach a piece of cloth took a whole summer? The cloth, after being treated with a caustic substance, was spread out on the grass, so that big bleach-fields were needed. Then, however, the chemists discovered chlorine gas and its bleaching properties, and now, by the aid of compounds containing chlorine, bleaching can be done in a short time and in the small space provided by a factory. This is lucky, for otherwise half the countryside would be covered with pieces of cotton and linen—in other words, modern output would be altogether impossible.

In the last few weeks I have seen a number of places in which science is being used to study the processes concerned with our clothing—some of these were Research Associations

under the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, one for cotton, one for wool, one for leather, and one for that rather different aspect of the problem, laundering. Others were University departments—for leather chemistry and textiles research. Others were private firms, such as are engaged in improving the machinery for making boots and shoes, and another is doing the same for knitting machinery. Then other laboratories which I had visited earlier were incidentally concerned with other aspects of this problem—for instance, the Animal Breeding Department at Edinburgh with rabbit-breeding for fur and sheep-breeding for wool, and the Rowett Institute at Aberdeen with the food of sheep and the quality of their wool; and there are plenty of other laboratories which I had not time to visit—concerned with dyeing, with linen, with real silk and artificial silk, with boot- and shoe-making, with cotton-breeding and cotton-growing.

The first thing that strikes me with all this array of research is the amount of it that goes to improve traditional methods and standards by giving them a scientific foundation. This is, I am sure, equally important for all industries, especially those with a strong traditional basis. For one thing, it prevents tradition from being dumb and unintelligent, and provides a method for communicating its results. For another, it improves the accuracy of traditional methods, and so helps both to standardise them and improve them. The skilled craftsman, accustomed to carrying out some process, if asked how he is sure the conditions are right, will often tell you he just knows by experience. He could not explain to another person, nor could he write down just what was necessary if the conditions were to be reproduced: he simply knows when they are right. Generally he does know in an almost uncanny way, considering that he is unprovided with accurate instruments and methods to give him any precise measurement, and often he knows in this way things which we cannot yet measure and describe accurately.

But whenever it is possible to introduce scientific methods of measurement, it is found, as a matter of hard fact, that the



Apparatus used by the Wool Industries Research Association
Left: Sunlight lamp used to fade dyed patterns. Centre: Matching lamp, for comparing colours. Right: Ultra-violet lamp, for examining fabrics

By courtesy of the Leeds Wool Research Association

standard of accuracy goes up. It goes up even for the individual craftsman; but it goes up still more for the industry as a whole, because then you have measurable standards which can be written down and used as a common basis for correcting the individual prejudices and foibles of different craftsmen.

I should like to give a few examples of this from different sides of the field of my subject. Take laundering as a concrete example that comes right home to everybody. In a modern

laundry, your collars, after washing, are passed round a metal roller, heated by gas. This ought to be at a particular temperature to give the best results, and the temperature ought not to vary more than a small amount if you are not to get various undesirable effects, such as collars getting scorched, or going limp afterwards, and so on. A widely practised method of telling the temperature is to spit on the finger, transfer the spit to the hot roller, and tell from the crackling it makes if conditions are right. With an experienced man this gives really remarkable results; but at the very best, as scientific research found, you could not expect a variation of less than fifty degrees or so either way. Science then went further and designed an automatic temperature-regulator, which can be set to keep the machine at any desired temperature, with only about five degrees variation. There is no excuse for collars spoilt by wrong temperatures now.

Just the same sort of thing has been done for the temperature of the finishing machines used for wool. Finish used to be a very tricky quality. But now it is possible to reproduce a finish over and over again by means of having accurate conditions.

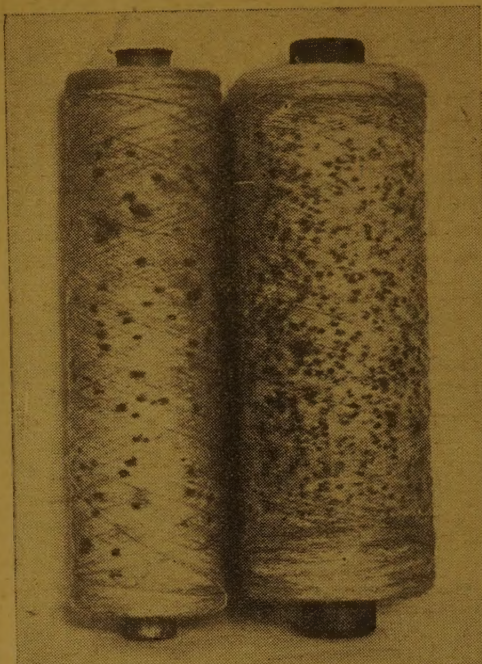
In leather research, an enormous amount of work has been done not only to standardise the tannin content of various substances used for tanning, but to standardise the physical and chemical conditions under which tanning should take place to give the best results; by means of chemical indicators and the like the tanning expert can now make accurate tests all the time to see if his vats are likely to give the best results. In the same way, in wool, the conditions under which the wool is to be 'scoured' or freed from its natural grease and from dirt have, it is found, got to proceed within certain limits of temperature and of acidity if the wool is not to be damaged; and science can not only measure these limits, but can produce gadgets to test for them in the work.

With cotton, again, we find the same steady improvement in technical process as a result of the accuracy which only scientific research can provide in communicable form. Different cottons are laboriously standardised in relation to the length of their fibres—both its average, and the amount of its variations from the average: on such data prophecies can be made as to the precise uses it should be put to, and the details of its spinning. Or again, cotton fibres could never stand up to the strain to which they are subjected in the machines if they were not strengthened by being dipped in size—there again

by the designing and building of a machine meant to cope with all the problems in the most efficient way. The result was a machine which was not only more efficient and quicker in its working, but only took up one-half of the space of the old machines: and even greater saving of space and increase of

efficiency is being achieved with a specially designed new spinning machine. Think what that means to a factory owner.

But there are plenty of other interesting aspects of research. Science, for instance, can be applied in the interest of workers in the industry or of the consumer of its products. Everyone knows how aggravating it is when a nice new bathing-dress shrinks so that you can hardly get into it, or splits



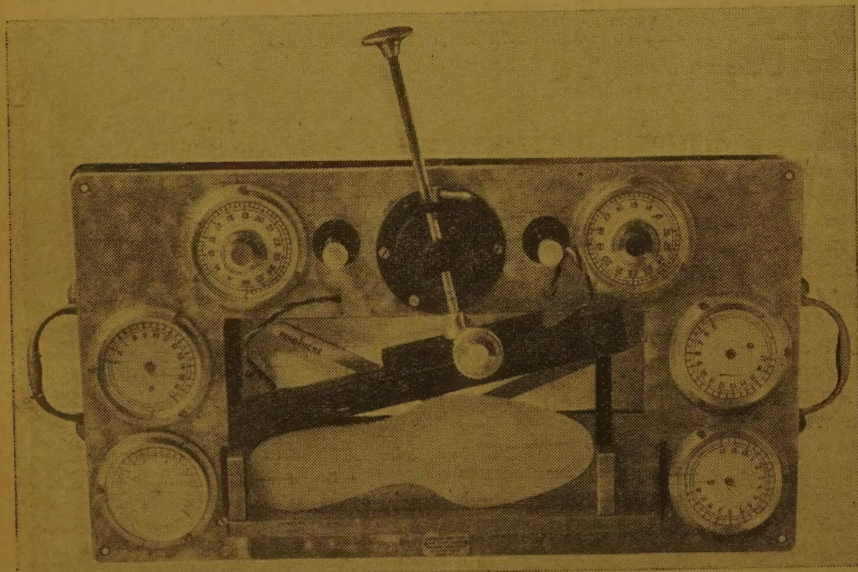
The Wool Industries Research Association has discovered a method for dealing with mildew in yarn, as shown in these cheeses of botany wool
By courtesy of the Leeds Wool Research Association

so that you begin to get out of it in the wrong place. This trouble has been much accentuated by the spread of sunbathing, and the Wool Research Association has been looking into it. The findings of science were quite definite. It is not merely or mainly the sea-water and the drying that are to blame. One chief cause is the ultra-violet rays in sunlight, which damage the intimate structure of wool much as they do the intimate structure of the living cells of our bodies. The other is the

presence in sea-water of certain kinds of bacteria—quite harmless from the point of view of causing disease—which, when nicely warmed up by the heat of the sun outside and of a human body inside, get very active and begin to rot the wool. The workers at the Research Association have now got an antiseptic which will discourage the germs; they have a treatment to make wool much more resistant to ultra-violet, and they will recommend the use of their new process for preventing shrinkage. Bathers should be happier next year. In another room at the same institution a vigorous anti-clothes-moth campaign is being prosecuted, with a good deal of success. Some of the work is being done in connection with the Forest Products Research Station, and boxes of cedar and other aromatic Empire woods are being tested for their qualities in keeping moths away.

Then there is the comfort of clothes. This depends largely on the ease with which air can get through the fabric—as everyone knows, the thinnest sheet of impermeable stuff is much more uncomfortable than a

thick layer of some cellular material. So instruments have been devised to test this property of fabrics in a quantitative way. Air is blown through a vertical tube under standard pressures, first without, and then with, a piece of the fabric interposed in the path of the air current. In the tube is an ingenious device, a little metal object with screw vanes which is supported by the air pressure as a celluloid ball can be suspended in the jet of a fountain. The resistance offered by the fabric is measured by the difference in height at which this object is held up in the tube by the air current. By such means we can get a fixed rating for



Instrument for measuring feet, designed with a view to supplying manufacturers with a classification of type and specification of a correct shoe
By courtesy of the British Boot, Shoe, and Allied Trades Research Association

science is helping to standardise and improve the treatment.

This sort of research is rarely spectacular; but it is absolutely necessary. It is the only way in which an industry, especially an industry of long standing which has grown up in the pre-scientific era, can improve the efficiency of its established processes to any large extent and with any reasonable speed: and the increase of efficiency may be considerable. At the Wool Research Association I saw a new carding machine which was the result simply of a painstaking scientific analysis of all the factors that enter into the operation of carding wool, followed

the air permeability of a fabric: and fixed ratings are the first step towards improved standards. Similar work is being done by the Boot and Shoe Trade Research Association—only here the problem is more complicated, as you want to raise the standard of leather both for preventing the passing through of water and for encouraging that of air.

Then we come to cases where science has made possible rather big jumps, instead of helping the gradual improvement of processes. I spoke earlier of the big jump in bleaching methods made possible by the discovery of chlorine gas. But chlorine bleaching, if excessive, will damage the fabric; so it is important to have a quantitative test for its effects. Now in the course of research on cotton, it was found that the cellulose material of which the cotton fibre is composed can be dissolved in a chemical substance called cuprammonium sulphate. What is more, it dissolves in a different way according as to whether it is unaltered cellulose or cellulose damaged by such processes as over-bleaching, so that its fluidity is different in the two cases. This has proved to be of great importance to the launderer. By putting samples of cotton fabric bleached in various ways into cuprammonium sulphate, then measuring the ease of the flow of the resulting solutions, you can get a direct measure of the damage, if any, done by the bleaching, and so, of course, improve and standardise the processes used for bleaching in laundries. The basic fact here, let me repeat, was discovered in the course of general research with the physical and chemical constitution of cotton fabrics.

Take another very striking example of a big change in the result of scientific research—the creaseless cotton put on the market recently by one of the big cotton firms. The history of this fabric is interesting. In order to achieve this production the head of the firm engaged the services of two scientists, a physicist and a chemist. He took in one hand a piece of wool fabric, in the other a piece of cotton fabric of the same size and weight, and crumpled both pieces into a ball. Then he opened his hands again: the wool, with its natural elasticity, uncreased itself, but the cotton stayed crumpled. 'I want you', he said, 'to make cotton fabric which will behave like the wool; take ten years if you like'. They tried everything, from indiarubber to gum and back again; and tried them scientifically, not just hit-or-miss. Eventually they got a synthetic substance whose molecules would slip nicely into the cotton fibres and give them elasticity. But instead of ten years it was fourteen before the new fabric was on the market. This well shows not only what slow slogging research, backed by scientific methods, can do, but also what a long and difficult job it can be.

Before going farther, I would like to give one more example, to show how a corresponding research is being focussed on our problem from very different angles. In the Animal Breeding Research Department at Edinburgh, Dr. Pickard is engaged in applying Mendel's principles of heredity to practical rabbit breeding. He showed me a whole series of the latest types of rabbit pelts for use in the fur trade. There was one which, until you actually handled it, was an excellent imitation of silver fox—the same dark hair with white ticking. He had made this himself, by introducing the hereditary factor for dark colour from one breed, and the factor which causes the white ticking from another of quite a different colour. Then there were really wonderful imitations of sable. These he had not created himself; but he had cleared up a puzzle of why they never bred true, and shown breeders how to produce 100 per cent. sables by breeding two quite different-looking pure breeds together. This was again an application of simple Mendelian principles. Imitations of silver fox and grey squirrel, of marten, of plush, of caracul—all these he showed me too. Furs are only a small branch of clothing: but they are important for their social implications. Cheap furs, like artificial silk, make it possible for women with small incomes to feel smart and fashionable, and this is altering the psychology of class-distinction.

So I could go on, only that I have not time. I must, however, just mention one line of research that is giving the most fundamental and revolutionary results—and that is the application of X-ray photography to textile fibres. X-ray photography is a method for revealing to us the invisible fine structure of substances—the way their actual atoms and molecules are arranged. It is a rather new branch of science, that owes more to Sir William Bragg than to any other man. I shall come back to it in a later talk; and shall only say now that it is allowing us with the eyes of the mind to see right inside the wool fibre and

understand its intimate structure, and that this is helping the wool-chemists to a new understanding of their work, and opening up the way for all kinds of new tricks for the practical man to play on wool fibres. To take but two examples, in all probability this new knowledge will soon help to a final solution of the old problem of making unshrinkable woollens; and since human hair differs only in detail from sheep's wool, it has already thrown light on some of the troublesome problems of permanent waving which afflict ladies' hairdressers.

But now I want to get on to a more general subject—the relation of science not merely to textile processes, but to the textile industries themselves, looked at as part of the social and economic structure of the country. And here we find ourselves in what is really a very queer world of actions and interactions. In the first place, science itself is changing the raw materials available for clothing. It has produced altogether new materials, like rayon. It has helped by means of breeding and selection and agricultural research to produce more of the old materials, and in better qualities. The production of cotton has been pushed up until there is a glut, even of the best kinds, on the world's markets. In my talk on food, I pointed out how the sheep-carrying capacity of this country could easily be doubled: and this concerns wool just as much as it does mutton. Recently large-scale work on the improvement of flax has been begun, in Russia, and this country, and elsewhere. There is no reason to doubt that the silk-producing capacity of silkworms could be doubled by similar breeding work. Now all these different lines of work exert violent effects, actual or potential, on the various textile industries. The work on flax is bringing about a renaissance of linen, and so depressing the chances of cotton.

New machinery may also help in changing fashions. At Leicester, I saw a machine designed to make possible a new kind of stitch in the knitting of underwear. While the needles flick in and out at terrific speed, some of them are made to move sideways and transfer the thread to their neighbours. The fabric made in this way is not yet on the market: but when it does it will doubtless set a new fashion in underwear, as has already been done in the past by the introduction of other new types of stitch. So here we may say that the machine designer sets the pace for fashion and comfort—and by so doing may give an advantage to one material over another. While on the subject of fashion, let us also remember that it is now the fashion to wear much less clothing than our ancestors did. But this is not merely fashion—it is also based on medical and physiological research which tells us that it is healthier to wear light clothing and so stimulate our skin to work at keeping us warm, than to muffle ourselves in layers of material and make no demands upon our skin. And this reduction in the amount of clothing worn naturally makes the struggle between the various textile industries more acute. One important result of this competition is that much research is going on to find new uses for the different raw materials of clothing. With cotton, for instance, an enormous amount is used for incorporating with rubber to give wearing properties to motor tyres: for this, specially strong fabric is needed. Then again new types of fabric are demanded for aeroplane wings. Another new use for cotton is for insulating the parts of electrical machinery: here there is a growing demand. And doubtless the creaseless cotton I mentioned before will find all kinds of new fields to invade.

With wool, an equally intensive search for new uses is proceeding. For instance, it too claims a share in the manufacturing of insulating material, and if certain difficulties are got over may be a dangerous rival to cotton in this field. Then there is rayon, which is finding an outlet in the manufacture of cellophane as well as in clothing—and so on. So, in a way, while science is making it possible for each of the separate industries involved in clothing to become more efficient, and to carry on in competition with its rivals, it is also aggravating that competition and causing rapid and violent fluctuations in the industry as a whole. Once more, in fact, we are brought up against economic and social problems—in this case against the problem of planning. Without the large-scale planning of industry, science is liable to cause as many difficulties as it relieves. That is not a reason to cut down the role of science, but rather to enlarge it. It means that we want scientific methods applied in other fields than those of technology and production.

The caption on the photograph of a 'heliodon', illustrating Mr. Julian Huxley's talk in our issue of October 25, should have described it as 'for studying the insulation of buildings', not insulation, as printed.

Japan and Lancashire Negotiate

By BARNARD ELLINGER

In our issue of September 6, we reprinted a talk broadcast by Sir William Clare Lees, the Chairman, on the eve of the departure of the Textile Delegation for India. Mr. Ellinger now discusses some of the conflicting interests which the delegates—representatives of England, India and Japan—are trying to reconcile in the present conversations

THESE are three great countries, Great Britain, Japan and India, whose interests are closely connected with the fortunes of the textile industry, particularly that part of it which produces cotton and artificial silk goods. Great Britain and Japan are both large producers of cotton and artificial silk fabrics, and a large part of their production is intended for export. India is not only a large consumer of these goods, but has a textile industry of her own which supplies nearly four-fifths of her needs. Last year the Indian mills produced nearly 3,000,000,000 yards of cotton piece goods, while another 1,000,000,000 yards or more was produced on hand-loom, which are still an important means of production in the Indian villages. In addition to these home supplies, India imported over 1,100,000,000 yards mainly from Great Britain and Japan. Japan's share has been increasing while ours has fallen. In 1930, for instance, Great Britain had 64 per cent. of the trade, and Japan 31 per cent., so that in two years Great Britain's share of the trade had dropped by about 14 per cent. of the total imports, while that of Japan has increased by about 19 per cent. Not only, however, has the Lancashire textile industry been seriously affected by this growth of Japanese competition, but also that of India, and the Indian Government has decided in the interests of its own textile industry to regulate the position in some way. It is felt both in India and in Lancashire that Japan's success is partly due to the fact that the value of her currency has fallen more than those of Great Britain and India, and her manufacturers are therefore able to quote exceptionally low prices for their goods abroad.

In these circumstances, the negotiations at Simla were opened. In following them it must be remembered that both Great Britain and Japan, beside supplying cotton goods to India, are large buyers of Indian products. This country imports from India nearly one-third (28 per cent.) of India's total exports, mainly tea, leather, cotton, metals, and ores. Japan, on the other hand, is India's largest customer for raw cotton, taking about one-half of her raw cotton exports, whereas we take under 10 per cent. Steps are now being taken in Lancashire with the object of increasing our consumption of Indian cotton. If Lancashire could take greater quantities of Indian cotton, it would replace, to some extent, the trade which India might lose if, as a result of the present talks, Japan were to consume less Indian cotton in the future. Such are some of the points being considered in conference at Simla. India, however, is not the only market in which Lancashire and Japan compete. The talks in India are to be followed by further discussions in London, between Japanese and British representatives, on their competition in other markets. Japanese delegates have also come to England to get in direct touch with the leaders of Lancashire industry, so that the two parties may try to understand each other's point of view.

The main point, however, I want to deal with here is: how will the negotiations in Japan, if they are successful, affect the position of the unemployed in this country? Will they only affect the unemployed in the cotton industry or will any decreased competition in cotton goods only lead to increased competition with other trades? If this were so, the outcome of successful negotiations from the point of view of the cotton industry, which would provide more work for our operatives, might cause more unemployment in other exporting trades.

In order to answer this question, we must understand something about the conditions of Japan itself and of the difficulties

with which she is faced. Japan's greatest difficulty is her population problem. Her population increases at the rate of about a million persons per year, and practically every available yard of land is already cultivated. One authority on Japan has written 'travellers are unanimous as to the minuteness and economy with which the land is utilised. Not a foot is wasted. Even the hill-sides are terraced to the very summits with almost incredible labour'. One writer tells how he saw the outer crater of a volcano being tilled 'while sulphurous smoke was rising from the centre of the new crater'. Forests occupy more than half of the taxable land of Japan; of the remainder, 70 per cent. is used for growing cereals, and about half of this for rice. More than half her people obtain their living from cultivating the land. Japan is still an agricultural country; more so than any country in Europe, even including Denmark, and yet she cannot feed her people without importing food. Nor can she clothe her people without importing cotton and wool, of which she has none in

her own country. True, she produces and exports large quantities of raw silk. She has some copper and comparatively small quantities of poor coal unsuitable for coking; but in raw materials generally she is very poor. And what is a country to do in these circumstances when she has a rapidly increasing population? Her superfluous population might emigrate if possible, but here again Japan is faced with a great difficulty. She has a much higher standard of living than that of other Far Eastern people, and her manual labourers cannot, therefore, exist in competition with



Spinning-room in a modern Japanese factory

E.N.A

other Eastern people. Nor can her people live as manual labourers either in tropical climates or in very cold climates. The countries to which Japan would like to send her surplus population—Australia and the West Coast of the United States and Canada—are closed to her, for these countries are unwilling to receive her immigrants.

The only other possibility which Japan has to enable her to feed and clothe her people is to absorb her surplus population into industry, and to export goods in order to import those commodities which her people must have in order to live. Part of her export up to now, and a large part, has consisted in supplying clothing mainly for other Eastern peoples. This clothing has consisted of cotton goods for which, just as in our own case, she has had to import the raw cotton, which, after being manufactured and exported, has enabled her to pay, not only for the imported cotton which has been used in the manufacture of these goods, but, by the labour she has added, for other imported commodities which she requires for her own use.

If then Japan must export in order to live, what will she do if her exports of cotton goods are reduced as a result of the conversations now taking place at Simla and those which are to take place in London? People in India and in England, and even many people in Japan, believe that owing to internal competition Japan has been selling her exported cotton goods at prices which are unnecessarily low. If this be so, she could obtain the same amount of money for a smaller quantity of exported goods, and it is, of course, money which she requires to pay for her imports. This might meet the position to some extent. Whether it would really help the Indian and Lancashire cotton trades may be doubtful, because if the consumers in other countries have to pay the same amount of money for a smaller quantity of Japanese goods, they may not have sufficient money left to buy a larger quantity of Lancashire and Indian goods. Beyond this, Japan must replace any export of cotton goods which she may lose; such replacement must take the form of the export of other

manufactured commodities. She has already built up a large export trade in rayon goods. She is now Australia's second largest customer for wool. She is practically manufacturing all the woolen cloth which she needs for her own use, and is already exploring the possibilities of export of this article.

Manchuria can supply Japan with iron ore and coking coal and can thus help her to develop her iron and steel industry, and the development of her iron and steel industry would help her with her shipbuilding and consequently her shipping trade. So that, apart from an increased export in many small articles like rubber shoes, toys, pencils, etc., if Japan is forced to reduce her export of cotton goods, and if she can find no other means of meeting her population difficulty, we may expect to have to face increased competition in our wool, iron and steel and shipbuilding industries, and if this competition becomes as acute as that which our cotton trade has to meet, less unemployment in the cotton trade may mean greater unemployment in these and other industries. In fact, so long as the world is unprepared to help Japan to solve her population problem by means of emigration, all nations must be prepared to meet intensive Japanese competition in their export trades and a diminishing of this competition in one trade may only mean an increase of competition in some other.

Again, we cannot solve the problem by saying that Japanese competition is unfair because she has a lower standard of living than our own. Canada and the United States complain of our competition, which they say is based on a standard of living which is less than theirs. Certain European countries on the other hand, have standards of living which are lower than ours. India has over 300,000,000 people, China has over 500,000,000. Japan, with her colonies, has approaching 100,000,000, so that the three countries between them count for nearly half the population of the world. How are we, with our 45,000,000 people, going to be able in the twinkling of an eye to raise the standard of living of these Eastern nations so that their competition should become what we term 'fair'? And even if we could do it, how would that reduce Japan's necessity to export? Would she not, in fact, require to import more goods to satisfy her increased standard of living, and, therefore, to export more goods in order to pay for them? In all discussions about Japanese competition, many people are apt to forget that Japan imports as well as exports, and her imports form, of course, exports from other countries. As a matter of fact, she imports more goods from the rest of the world than she exports to the world, and even imports more goods from the British Empire and the United Kingdom than she exports either to us or to the whole Empire.

Furthermore, just as it is misleading to talk of unfair Japanese

rug makers, 8s. 6d.; shop assistants, 8s. to 12s. Lest it should be thought that these are 'sweated' wages, I will add some of the Trade Board rates for girls of 14. Boot and shoe repairing, 5s.; corset trade, 7s.; dressmaking, 5s.; milliners, etc., 6s.; linen piece-goods, 9s.; and even in the cotton trade, some girls of 14 start at 7s., and do not get more than 15s. until they have reached 18 years of age.

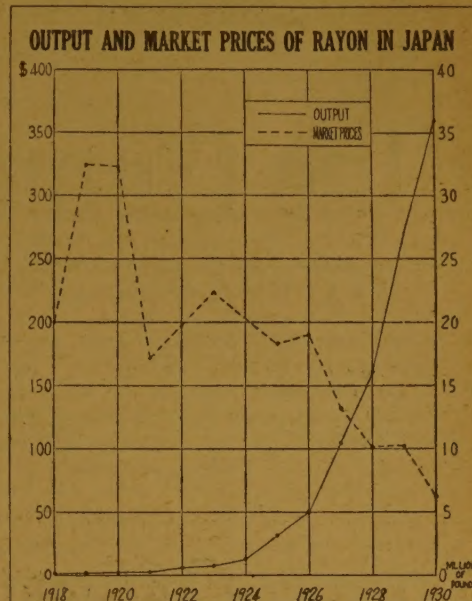
Another point is, the only girls in this country who live-in are domestic servants — and they often start at 8s. to 10s. per week — whereas all the young girls in the Japanese cotton industry live-in. But under what conditions are they housed, you may say? Well, Mr. Arnold Pearse, writing in 1929, said that all the girls in the big combines are better housed

and fed than they would be at home. He likened their life to a period of disciplinary training—not unlike the military service for the young men—for apart from their work in the mills, they attend school, and learn, among other things, designing, cooking, sewing and domestic management. Mr. Pearse said that he doubted whether many girls in expensive boarding schools in Europe were better cared for or had more freedom. Lest it should be thought that this is prejudiced, the following is taken from the report of the International Labour Office, 1933, on Industrial Labour in Japan. It states that lectures, study groups, reading circles, circulating libraries, theatrical and other entertainments, football, baseball, and tennis play a part in the life of many Japanese factories; and adds that while it is true that the dormitory system in its present form involves considerable loss of personal freedom, it has many advantages, particularly from the point of view of welfare work.

When all is said and done, then, it avails us nothing to try and solve the problem by comparing the conditions of labour. The problem which has to be faced, not only by Japan, but by the whole of the world, is Japan's population problem. Even if the growth in her population were arrested now, there are pro-

bably at least fifteen million children already born who will have to seek employment as they leave school—that is, fifteen million children will want employment in excess of the people who leave industry by death or otherwise. Until that problem is solved Japan must continue to increase her exports. If she is driven out of one trade she will enter another. If she has to leave one market, she will go into another. Every alteration in the nature or destination of her exports will cause some dislocation in the industries of other countries—not least in our own. And every dislocation of industry leads to unemployment. Hence the immediate significance of the conversations, now going on in India and Lancashire, to the unemployed people of this country.

Mr. A. Smith has drawn our attention to the omission of the word 'Herring' in his letter published in our last issue. After the sentence: 'First class cod makes 3s. to 7s. 6d. per stone at the coast and inland markets', the letter should have continued: 'Herrings: the retailer may pay 7s. 7d. per cwt.', etc.



Graph showing how the prices of rayon have fallen as the output has increased



One of Japan's huge rayon factories

Illustrations from 'Present-Day Japan', being the English supplement to the Osaka and Tokyo Asahi

competition, so it is equally misleading to talk of her 'sweated' labour. After all, what is 'sweated' labour? Personally I regard it as labour which is so ill-paid that it does not afford a living wage commensurate with the standard of living existing in the country as a whole. But we cannot call labour 'sweated' if it affords a wage which enables the wage-earner to enjoy a standard of living at least as high as that of most of the other people by whom he is surrounded. What are, for instance, actually the conditions existing in the cotton mills in Japan? Eighty per cent. of the operatives are females and of these the great majority are young girls between the ages of 14 to 18. They earn, reckoning the yen at 2s., the rate which existed before both countries left the gold standard—about 10s. per week. There are many girls of this age in this country earning little more in various trades. For instance, young girls of 14 and upwards have been placed recently in industry at the following wages. Furniture stainers, 9s. 9d.; packers, 8s. 10d.; book-binders, 8s.;



The Listener

All communications should be addressed to the Editor of THE LISTENER, Broadcasting House, London, W.I. The articles in THE LISTENER being mainly reprints of broadcast talks, original contributions are not invited. Articles in THE LISTENER do not necessarily represent the views of the B.B.C. Yearly Subscription rates (including postage): Home and Canada, 17s. 4d.; Foreign, 19s. 6d. Shorter periods, pro rata.

Reviving Craftsmanship?

LAST week, at the instigation of Professor A. E. Richardson, a meeting was called of craftsmen from all over the country, who after discussion voted for the foundation of an Honourable Company of Craftsmen. Its members are to be handicraft workers: it will set up a Court similar to those of the mediæval guilds; and it will aim at 'assisting the destruction of the mass mind by the introduction of the beautiful in all forms for the daily use, enjoyment and elevation of the people'. Now this announcement, admirable in itself, is bound to raise in the minds of the critical a good many uneasy recollections—of the good work of the Morris School, which somehow never had the success or the influence its founder hoped; of—on a far lower plane—the self-conscious work of the art-and-crafty school which now looks so hopelessly out of date. Why such movements do not succeed was succinctly stated in the Gorell Report—'not because their fundamental principles have ceased to be valid, but because they are not adequate to meet the conditions of large-scale production required to supply the needs of a modern community, and especially of consumers of moderate means'. This principle would seem to condemn straightaway any such revival of craftsmanship as Professor Richardson's scheme foreshadows—if his were a commercial proposition. But that is precisely what it is not, and that is why it should succeed in its own sphere. There is no intention of competing with the machine in commercial production. Nobody is talking at this time of day of hand-made motor-cars or typewriters. In its own huge field the machine is inevitable, and this Company of Craftsmen is not out to conquer any of its territory. But there is territory where the machine has but a doubtful claim to supremacy, and there is territory too where it has no claim at all; and this is where the Company of Craftsmen comes in.

Its aims and functions are roughly twofold. A clue to the first is given by the statement of one of its professed objects—'Inducing the rich to consider the claims of contemporary art and craftsmanship'. Wealthy patrons may not now be as common as two centuries ago: yet they still exist to provide opportunities for the craftsmen. The Scottish War Memorial, the Eton tapestries, the Stratford Theatre, are all recent examples of craftsmen's work commissioned by corporate bodies. The demands of churches, colleges, and institutions may never be very

great, but they will probably always be fairly steady, and an equally steady supply of fine craftsmanship should be available for them. The movement is no less concerned with the other aspect of the problem, with those handicrafts which are a necessity—such as the making of scientific instruments, or the humble but honourable crafts of the countryside—thatching, ironwork, quilting, etc. It seems likely that these latter will prosper with any revival of agriculture, and any effort to raise their standard is to be encouraged: it should also be remembered, though, that for several years past the Rural Industries Bureau and the Women's Institutes have been concerned with just these questions, and the flourishing condition of many domestic crafts must be credited to their guidance and enthusiasm.

We fancy, however, that Professor Richardson and his colleagues are not thinking so much about the consumer's aspect of the movement as about its effect on the worker. 'Industrialism', Mr. Eric Gill has said (more than once) 'has released the workman from the necessity of being anything of an artist'. A revival of craftsmanship will undoubtedly help to restore to the comparatively few whom society can afford to employ as craftsmen the sense of responsibility which industrialism has taken from the machine-worker. But it will also point the way to a new responsibility and pleasure-in-making for the enormous majority who always will have to be machine-workers—but in their spare time. As our Professors of Forecast are always reminding us, the chief problem of the age of leisure will be to find enough first-hand occupations to fill the hours released for work—first-hand as against the second-hand ones of watching and hearing other people doing things. Craftsmanship in the widest sense—from making furniture to making toys—may then come into its own, in a purely uncommercial sense. It would indeed be odd if the machine that killed the handicraftsman as an economic necessity were to restore to him the leisure in which he could pursue handicrafts for fun.

Week by Week

RECENT experiments suggest that there is a new trend in the choice and presentation of 'news'. The modern popular press, the achievement of Lord Northcliffe, has had two main principles in view: 'News and the Probing of the Public Mind'. Where news is defined as 'surprise', a high value is set upon sensational events, which, for Lord Northcliffe, constituted 'news in its narrowest and best sense'. Of secondary interest only was that part of the news which he called 'talking points', topics under discussion at the moment, which might provide the material for the longer topical article. The first type of news came to a newspaperman by chance, the second depended upon a search for 'what the public wants'. But in the Northcliffe tradition there was no room for news presentation that should preserve continuity and reveal the trend of events. Such, in the opinion of the new Editor of the *News-Chronicle*, Mr. G. Aylmer Vallance, is the necessity of the moment. In a recent speech before the Aldwych Club, he made this statement: 'The public is demanding more serious newspapers; it wants more foreign news, which is destined to play a much larger part in the popular newspaper than was possible a few years ago. It demands too more continuity in its news'. News of the older sort Mr. Vallance called 'selling news', in opposition to the 'hard news' of the future. News distributors do not of course always have the same gaps to fill. While the B.B.C. is experimenting with the Saturday news-reel, in which the plain record of events is supplemented by eye-witness accounts or explanatory talks, two weekly papers, the *Week End Review* and *Everyman*, are facing another problem. They are attempting to present, alongside their normal commentaries and criticisms, a brief factual digest of the week's news. All such experiments, however different in purpose they may be, reveal a changing attitude. Instead of news that is mere 'surprise', the public now demands news that has been put into historical

perspective, that has 'meaning'. If so, one important consequence will be that the leading article will regain the prestige and influence of the pre-Northcliffe era.

* * *

Three cupboards full of fog are among the equipment of the new building of the Post Office Research Station at Dollis Hill which was opened by the Prime Minister on October 23—and though, as was remarked in the broadcast talk on the building by Sir Stephen Tallents, these may be regarded as one of the 'stunts' of the station, yet 'a brief glance even at the stunts gives one some idea of the delicate and complicated scientific work which lies at the back of a telephone receiver'. The three glass-fronted cupboards contain respectively a good imitation of a London fog, of a sea fog, and of the smoky fog of an industrial town; and here metal telephone parts are being tested for their resistance to corrosion—the wear-and-tear of years being compressed into a few weeks of intense experiment. The station contains also 'the most silent room in the world', for use in work where echo must be eliminated—a chamber lined with layers on layers of lint, where a shout seems hardly more than a muffled whisper; and a laboratory in which was lately perfected 'a sort of paravane apparatus to be towed by cable ships in search of faults in submarine cables. This invention has already saved valuable time for cable ships and telephone subscribers alike by enabling breaks in cables to be quickly located at sea, and quickly mended'. A new invention which will affect the subscriber more directly if it should be adopted is 'a strip of sound film clasped to a rotating drum', which, at the appropriate moment, substitutes for the 'tone signal' that means the number is engaged, a girl's voice saying 'Line engaged . . . line engaged'. But the Post Office is wondering whether subscribers will try to start a conversation with the robot lady, and become annoyed at her limited vocabulary. It is hoped that next

month some of these inventions will be on view to the public in the newly-opened G.P.O. display shop in the Strand.

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Our Scottish correspondent writes: That once ambitious body, the Scottish National Theatre Society, has reached a significant decision. This is, that its active group, the Scottish National Players, shall give no major performance in Glasgow this winter, but shall confine its activities mainly to modest tours in rural areas. The decision has been enforced to some extent by the facts of the depression, no doubt, but not altogether. Mainly, it confesses that urban Scotland is not yet prepared, so far as the theatre is concerned, to think in 'national' terms: that the long series of attempts to persuade Glasgow to do so has been unavailing, and that the only hope is to keep alive for a potentially glorious future by taking advantage of the lessons of the Community Drama movement's success. We have commented before on the silliness of the situation wherein two bodies with much the same end in view should, in a country so small as Scotland, regard each other with hostility (as is our strange Scottish way), but this strategical retreat on the part of the S.N.T.S. has a bearing on the question of nationalism in general, particularly on the capacity of Scotland to achieve a contented self-sufficiency in isolation. It is at least clear that as English-speakers we must, in the matter of culture, remain largely dependent on England. The Scottish novelist cannot live without his English public; the Scottish reader would die without his English novelist. So, as this decision indicates, in the affairs of the stage. A Scottish National Theatre may be created in due course. It is all to the good that the new way of thinking inclines the gifted among us to think in Scottish terms for the enrichment of Scottish life. But there is a lesson in these recent proceedings for those enthusiasts who would have art the vehicle mainly of either a vaguely sentimental or positively angry nationalism.

A Million Books Wanted

AN OPPORTUNITY, which readers of THE LISTENER will no doubt particularly welcome, of giving help and service to the unemployed is provided by the appeal which is now being made through the press and over the wireless for a million books to be distributed through the many hundreds of centres for the unemployed up and down the country. This appeal has been launched by a special Committee recently established by the British Institute of Adult Education, under the chairmanship of Lord Eustace Percy, for the purpose of co-ordinating and promoting educational facilities for the unemployed. The Committee has made a survey of the unemployed centres and has discovered that thousands of unemployed men and women are starved of reading matter, particularly in the form of books. Those who have read the 'Memoirs of the Unemployed' published this summer in our columns will realise what a difference an adequate provision of books can make to the mental and psychological condition of those suffering from unemployment.

Arrangements have been made for giving publicity to this appeal not only in the press but also through broadcasting. Mr. Desmond MacCarthy in his book talk last Monday, October 30, and Mr. G. K. Chesterton in his forthcoming book talk next Monday, November 6, are inviting their hearers to look through their bookshelves and send whatever volumes they can spare to the organisers of the appeal. Moreover, the appeal is addressed not only to private individuals but to booksellers, publishers, librarians and any others who may be in charge of stocks of books and magazines from which a surplus could be sifted for distribution to the unemployed.

The arrangements for the collection of books are as follows. A central depot has been established in London at 11 HANWAY PLACE, TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, W.1. To this depot parcels of books from all over the country (up to 11 lb. can go by post in one parcel) and larger consignments in the home countries area should be sent. In addition to the London depot, provincial depots have been established at the Y.M.C.A. branches in the following regional centres: Birmingham, 137 Bristol Street; Manchester, 56 Peter Street; Leeds, Albion Place;

Bristol, St. James' Square; Cardiff, Station Terrace; Swansea, St. Helen's Road; Newcastle, Blackett Street; also at Belfast, Unemployed Lads' Club, 37 Linenhall Street; and Scotland, the Central Public Library at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Perth, Inverness and Aberdeen. The public are asked to send their books to these depots and to pay carriage on all consignments of books. Certain carriers in the following regional centres have generously offered special facilities to members of the public who wish to send books to the depots within their areas. Enquiries should be made of the following:—

London: Carter Paterson (40 miles radius).
Manchester: A. Garlick, The City Parcels Express, 1 Peel Street.
Birmingham: E. A. Mellor, The Midland 'Red' Commercial Motor Services, Seymour Street, Albert Street.
Leeds: R. Witherick, The Northern Express Co., 23 Saville Street.
Bristol: E. F. Knill (Pickfords, Ltd.), 98 Victoria Street.

At the depots the books will be received, acknowledged, classified and distributed under the supervision of the Depot Committee. Each Committee will consist of representatives of the National Union of Teachers and the Y.M.C.A., and wherever possible the public libraries. The unemployed centres throughout the country have been asked to specify their needs, and these will be met as far as possible. An equitable allocation of the books will be made by the National Committee and the despatch of the books from regional centres to the unemployed centres will be undertaken by the Regional Committees acting under the instruction of the National Committee. The unemployed centres will pay the cost of carriage of the books from the regional depots.

In some districts where there is acute unemployment, members of the public may desire to have their gifts of books distributed locally. In this case they are advised to consult their county or borough library; it may be possible for these libraries to receive and distribute the books in their areas. Any centre for the unemployed that has not yet signified its desire to participate in the book distribution scheme, and anyone else requiring information concerning it, should communicate immediately with the Secretary of the British Institute of Adult Education, 39 Bedford Square, London, W.C.1.

'The Debate Continues'—III

The Empire in World Politics

By the Rt. Hon. J. H. THOMAS, M.P.

IN this series of political broadcasts you have heard, during the past few weeks, a good deal as to the positive achievements and the alleged deficiencies of the National Government of which I am proud to be a member. I want to talk to you now about something which is outside the sphere of party politics altogether, not because I shirk the issues which lie between us and our political opponents, not because I am any the less ready than I have always been to take and give the hard knocks inseparable from political or from any other controversy, but because I believe that, at this present hour, it is good for us to turn our eyes outwards for a moment and look at ourselves in relation to the rest of the world.

The cause of peaceful co-operation between nations has just received a strong blow. It is not a knock out. The world can and will recover from it. How best can we help towards this recovery? World-wide co-operation is, for the moment, in great difficulties. But there is within the world a group of nations and peoples, called the British Empire, covering between them more than a quarter of the earth's surface and including nearly a quarter of the human race, in which co-operation has not only not failed but is living and growing.

What is the most striking feature in the relations between the nations and peoples of the British Empire? It is, I think, this. The relations between other nations and peoples are based, fundamentally, on the desire to avoid war. It is to that end that almost the whole of their foreign policy is directed. It was with that object that the League of Nations was created. The acts of their governments are wise or foolish as they diminish or increase the dangers of war. The Governments of the British Empire, on the contrary, start from the assumption that war between them is inconceivable. We begin where the others leave off. We can direct our energies to the positive end of achieving good and not merely to the negative end of avoiding evil. And as a result we can afford, not merely in our relations with one another but in our relations with the rest of the world, to seek other than purely selfish ends.

Let me remind you of the description which is embodied in the Report of the Imperial Conference of 1926—a description issued under the conjoint authority of representatives of all its members. 'The British Empire', the Report stated, 'is not founded upon negations. It depends essentially, if not formally, on positive ideals. Free institutions are its life-blood. Free co-operation is its instrument. Peace, security and progress are among its objects'. Let me add that to no other group of nations in the world could that description be truly applied.

It is worth our while, I think, to ask ourselves how this positive co-operation for positive ends has come about. Its real origin, I believe, is the inherent love of personal liberty and self-government in the races which make up the Empire. It is no mere chance that, at a time when democratic government is rapidly disappearing all over the rest of the world, within the British Empire it was never more firmly rooted than it is today. And it is no mere chance that, at a time of crisis such as that through which the world has been passing, while other countries have turned to dictatorship in its various forms, no fewer than four of the great nations in the British Empire—Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and ourselves—have put into power governments selected not from the representatives of one party alone, but from the representatives of other parties also. Dictatorships necessarily look inwards. A nation which has yielded up its liberty must be kept drugged lest it rebel, and the easiest drug of all to administer is a strong dose of selfish national conceit. Democracy labours under no such necessity. Based as it is on the will of the people as a whole, and not only upon that of a few, it can take the long view; and, because it knows that in present conditions no nation can be prosperous while the rest of the world is poverty-stricken, it can afford to look outwards and take measures which will benefit others as well as itself. And if this is true, as I believe it to be true, of a party democratic government, it is doubly true of a government

like ours, which draws its support and its inspiration from all parties alike.

The British Empire, then, is an example to the world today that co-operation for positive ideals is possible between great and free nations. And that example is one not of precept alone but of practice as well. It is, I firmly believe, to this readiness of the nations of the British Commonwealth to co-operate for positive ideals with one another that we owe the fact that they are today, relatively to the rest of the world, more prosperous, more powerful, more certain of their future. The world has been passing through the greatest crisis in history. What nations, in that crisis, have suffered less than the Dominions and ourselves? There are signs—real and hopeful signs—that the worst is past. Nowhere are those signs more numerous, is recovery more visible, than in the British Empire.

There are today 467,000 more persons employed in this country than there were six months ago. In the last three months our imports have gone up by £8 millions and our exports by £9 millions. In Canada, in Australia, in New Zealand, in South Africa a similar improvement has taken place. And this improvement is no temporary stimulation, produced by an artificial injection of national confidence and liable to die as soon as the effect of the dose wears off. It is a real step forward along the path to recovery. And it is derived, not from the determination of each one of us to pursue our own selfish ends, but from the determination of all of us to help ourselves by helping one another. There are people who will tell you that the Ottawa Conference was a failure. I say that the figures speak for themselves. In the nine months immediately following the Conference our trade with the Empire has risen from 36 per cent. of our total trade to 40 per cent. Moreover in the latest period for which statistics are available the total trade of the Ottawa Dominions and India with the United Kingdom has also increased from 36 per cent. of their whole trade to 40 per cent., and those figures mark only the first effects of Ottawa. And even if the figures had been less striking than they are, nevertheless the Ottawa Conference would have remained not only a landmark in the history of the Empire but a striking example to the world that it is possible for a group of free nations, if only they will look beyond narrow and selfish ends, to work together for a common good.

So much for the readiness and ability of the nations of the British Commonwealth to co-operate among themselves. I could say much more. I could remind you of the declarations, made at successive Imperial Conferences, of the intention of each of us to consult with the others in all matters, political no less than economic, of common interest. My belief, which is founded on a good deal of experience, is that this consultation is an essential of our success. When occasions have arisen—and there have unfortunately been a few—when this principle has been forgotten, the nation which has forgotten it suffers in the long run.

The British Empire displays, in fact, a wholly new type of political union—a type pregnant, as I believe, with promise for the future of the world. It is a type of union not hastily conceived and born to meet a crisis, but gradually evolved from that love of freedom and self-government to which I have already referred. It developed in peace and prosperity and has been brought to maturity by war and adversity. It has proved itself. We know now that there is no shock that it cannot withstand, no strain that it cannot resist.

I have spoken of the achievements of the nations of the British Commonwealth in co-operation with one another. More important still, in times such as these, is the lead which they have given to other nations in co-operation in world affairs. Two outstanding achievements emerged from the Monetary and Economic Conference which met this summer. One was the agreement reached by the wheat-producing and importing countries under the Chairmanship of Mr. Bennett,

the Prime Minister of Canada; the other was the declaration on monetary and economic policy prepared and assented to by the delegations of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and India. For the first, members of the British Commonwealth were in a great measure responsible: it sprang from their initiative, it was carried through largely by their efforts, it was their willingness to make individual sacrifices which gave it its shape and alone made it possible, and it is destined, I hope and believe, to point the way to other similar measures by which the hopeless lack of co-ordination between producer and consumer, which more than any other factor has brought us all to the verge of ruin, may be regulated and controlled. For the second, the joint declaration of monetary and economic policy, members of the British Commonwealth were alone responsible. Of the technical aspects of that declaration I do not, of course, intend to speak here, but I may perhaps remind you of the emphasis which it laid not only on the need for consultation between the Governments of the British Commonwealth as to their monetary and economic policy, but on the necessity for co-operation with other nations to further the rise of wholesale prices, and to restore a satisfactory international monetary standard. It was not a declaration which looked solely to our own difficulties. It was, in full accord with the spirit by which we have always been actuated not only between ourselves but towards the rest of the world, an attempt to find a way of escape from the dangers which for so long have beset not us alone, but the world at large.

I have endeavoured to show that the British Empire is a new experiment in history. The Empire has proved that it is possible for free and independent nations to join together, not merely to meet a temporary emergency, but in a permanent union, in which each member retains absolute freedom, but all endeavour to consult the interests of all. That union is deeply rooted in our common allegiance to the Crown. Why is it that, when elsewhere in the world so many thrones have fallen, in the British Empire monarchy was never so firmly established as it is today? Is it not because for us the Crown represents, not domination, but the very spirit of service in a common cause? It is to that spirit of co-operation, cemented by their common allegiance to the Crown, that the nations of the British Commonwealth owe the fact that they occupy today a place in the world greater than ever before in their history. I have endeavoured to show that the members of the Commonwealth have been ready to co-operate not only with one another to promote their own interests, but with the rest

of the world to promote the peace and prosperity of the world as a whole. They have learned in their dealings with one another that co-operation means sacrifice: every one of us gave up something at Ottawa, and all of us, I believe, got more than we gave. They have learned that agreements cannot last which are based on the principle that one party gives everything that the other asks and the other gives nothing that he wants to keep. That is a lesson which, I fear, the world as a whole has yet to learn.

What moral can we draw from the achievements to which I have referred? Surely this: it is the readiness of each member of it to work unselfishly together for common ends that has brought the British Commonwealth to its present position, which has made it by far the most powerful and prosperous group of States in the world, which has enabled it to render services of the utmost value to the cause of world peace and world recovery, and has made it certain that it will render greater services yet. In the position of the British Empire today we see the proof that co-operation spells not merely safety but prosperity and that international selfishness leads straight to ruin. We learned the lesson long ago that great peoples cannot live in unity unless they are prepared to give as well as to take: we are learning it still, and we hope that the world is learning it too. We, at least, with our history behind us, shall have no excuse if we fail now to apply that lesson.

One more word. I said at the outset that I was going to speak to you of something which stood outside party politics. Thank God, the British Empire does so stand and I trust that it always will. Each of the great parties in our State has made a contribution to its structure, and none has surpassed the others. I do not claim that the National Government has been more faithful to the ideals and principles which I have stated than any of its predecessors. But I am entitled to claim this. At a time such as the present it is of the utmost value that Great Britain should be represented in the Councils of the Empire by a Government which has behind it a great majority drawn from every party in the State. In times such as those through which we have been passing it is vital that we should put aside our domestic divisions, although I have no doubt that those divisions are based on a real desire to serve, each of us as best we can, the interests of our country as a whole. It is vital that, proud of the achievements of the past and ready and willing to make our contribution to the future, we should face, as a united nation, the great issues which confront us.

Commonwealth of Nations—V

Australia's Century of Progress

By Professor D. B. COPLAND

The Professor of Commerce at Melbourne University traces the growth of Australia up to her present important position in world affairs and discusses the topics that are engaging her attention today

AUSTRALIA is one of the youngest partners in the British Commonwealth of Nations. It was only in 1835 that John Pascoe Fawcner landed at the head of Port Philip Bay and remarked that it would be a good place for a village. The village has grown to the Melbourne of today, with its million people, and will next year celebrate its centenary. In 1788, nearly 50 years before Fawcner founded Melbourne, the Colony of New South Wales had been established under Governor Arthur Philip. Colonisation had also started in Tasmania, South Australia, and Western Australia, but we may take Melbourne's rapid growth as symptomatic of the development of Australia in a century of high endeavour. Six States were finally carved out of the Australian Continent. By the end of the century these states had developed into thriving self-governing democracies, conscious of their position as members of an Australian nation. This ideal of common citizenship was responsible for the establishment in 1901 of the Commonwealth of Australia. The states retained their individuality and many of their powers, but common problems like defence, customs and excise, postal services, immigration and external affairs, became the province of the federal authority.

The area of Australia is nearly 3,000,000 square miles; and she is sometimes reproached for her small population. But Australia was nearly empty 100 years ago, and today she has over 6½ million people. Her population was growing before the war at the rate of 2½ per cent. per annum, a rate exceeded

only by New Zealand. With her very low death rate Australia's natural increase in population is high—1.5 per cent. before the war and about 1 per cent. now. Immigration at an average rate of ½ per cent. per annum was the experience of the present century down to the great depression. This means that in normal times Australia was adding annually about 70 thousand to her population by natural increase, and 35 thousand by immigration. Capacity to absorb population has been disturbed by the depression, and immigration is not possible at the moment. But we must remember that in the period 1922-1928 Australia took 275 thousand immigrants. In better times the immigration will doubtless be restored.

Australia is accustomed to periods of adversity. Her primary industries are subject to attack from two hereditary enemies—low prices and droughts. On this occasion it is low prices that have played havoc with her economic life. Last year she received £83 millions for her exports. Yet the volume of these exports was 30 per cent. above the pre-depression amount for which she received nearly £150 millions in those more fortunate days. She met the blow to her prosperity with characteristic vigour, and is now profiting by the comprehensive and severe sacrifices imposed upon all classes in 1931, by the great national effort embodied in the Premiers' Plan. But her export prices are still low, and complete prosperity cannot be restored unless they can be raised. While they are low, Australia's capacity to buy British or other overseas goods must be impaired. She was, before the

depression, and still is, one of Britain's best customers. Her recent action in reducing import duties on British goods by 17 per cent. should assist British trade. Depression and falling prices have severely contracted her spending power. In 1928 she took nearly £150 millions of imports. She can now afford to take only £60 millions to £70 millions. Australia cannot buy imports unless she has an income from exports. Unfortunately she is experiencing increasing difficulties in finding markets for exports. The ideal of national self-sufficiency, enforced by trade barriers in many countries, is a new menace to Australian economic development. Australia, like some other British Dominions, was developed on the theory that foodstuffs and raw materials would be required in increasing quantities by industrial countries. But these countries are now protecting their own

average man; secondly, the control of immigration to avoid racial conflicts; and thirdly, the fostering of national development within the British Commonwealth of Nations.

On the first it is only necessary to say that Australia has made a swift and drastic adjustment in her standard of living to meet the economic conditions of the depression. She will seek to develop her territory on the basis of this lower standard of living, doubtless raising it to the old level if world conditions favour her again. Though lower than the pre-depression standard, it still offers to the average man a standard somewhat higher than is prevalent in most other countries. The predominant view in Australia is that a rising standard of living in other countries is preferable to a further fall in her own standard. On her second main national ideal she stands firm upon the

principles of what is popularly known as a White Australia policy. This is not an expression of racial superiority—nor is it a selfish attempt to preserve the good things of the Australian continent for a privileged few. The policy is based upon a sincere conviction that internal racial conflicts create social and political difficulties that should be avoided as far as practicable. For this view she finds support in the experience of other countries, even of British Dominions, with racial problems. The maintenance of her high ideal must, of course, depend upon the vigour with which she develops her natural resources.

Living in a vast island continent with an environment of its own, the Australian even now is developing into a distinct national type. His qualities of resource, courage and inde-



Collins Street, Melbourne, as it was in 1840—

farmers by prohibitive tariffs or by quotas, and the scope for trade in some Australian staples has greatly narrowed. In these circumstances, Australia cannot afford to take from the Old World, especially Britain, more goods, capital and immigrants if this condition persists.

I have dwelt on these trade matters because they define for you the main economic problem before Australia. Her future is wrapped up with the future of inter-Empire trade and of international trade. A little less than half her exports are taken by the United Kingdom, and about 10 per cent. by other parts of the Empire. Of foreign countries, Japan takes one-fourth of the remainder, and France about one-fifth. The balance is taken in smaller quantities by many countries, of which the United States, Belgium and China are the chief. Australia recognises the overwhelming importance of the British market, and she grants tariff and other preferences to Britain. But she also recognises the importance of world trade to her. Like Great Britain, she must seek to reconcile her general interests in an expanding world trade with her special interests in Imperial trade. Inter-Empire trade must be fostered by mutual effort, as laid down at Ottawa in 1932. But Australia recognises that the Commonwealth of Nations cannot prosper in an impoverished world. This gives the setting in which she views international problems, and she stands ready to co-operate in efforts to promote world economic recovery and better international relations. Leadership in efforts to raise world prices, to restore international trade and to promote disarmament, must rest with the Great Powers. Australia is not unmindful of the difficulties of co-operative world effort in attacking these problems. There is nevertheless some impatience among her people that progress is so slow.

On internal policy we may recognise three important national ideals, which are accepted by all political parties: firstly, the maintenance of a relatively high standard of living for the



—and as it is today

pendence were strikingly illustrated during the War. He will continue to bring these qualities to the counsels of Empire. But Australia recognises that she has more to gain politically, intellectually and economically by her association with the Commonwealth of Nations than she has to offer. Whilst she retains an independence of outlook characteristic of her developing national sentiment, she remains more firmly convinced than ever of the value of her association with the Commonwealth of Nations.

Within the framework of these three national ideals there is wide scope for differences of opinion and of political endeavour. Let me mention briefly three problems—the tariff, State control of industry, and federal relations. These will illustrate the policy of the three main political parties—Nationalist, Country and Labour. On the tariff, Labour believes in high duties to protect home industries and the standard of living; the Country Party desires a very low tariff in order to lift tariff costs from primary



The Woolshed. Wood engraving by Myrtle Fasken

producers; and the Nationalist Party stands between the two, firmly convinced of the need of Protection but conscious that it may be carried too far. The Nationalist Party is at present in office in the Commonwealth Parliament, and it seeks to put into force the recommendations of an independent Tariff Board which has recently become more critical of the excesses of Protection.

On the control of industry, the Labour Party has always advocated increasing State ownership and control. Natural monopolies and public utilities have always been claimed by all parties as suitable for public ownership. Let me give you some examples: Australia has 27,000 miles of railways, practically all under Government control. In Victoria the State Electricity Commission is using the enormous brown coal deposits for the generation of electricity and the manufacture of briquettes. When the scheme is fully developed it will produce 200,000 h.p. and use 4 million tons of coal per annum. In land settlement and irrigation the State has been very active. On the Murray River, between New South Wales and Victoria, one of the largest reservoirs in the world is under course of construction. But the Labour Party believes in extending this policy of State ownership to many other industries. This is not the faith of either the Country Party or the Nationalist Party. On the whole, both these parties feel that State ownership has proceeded far enough in Australia and that private enterprise should be encouraged to develop new areas. This is the fundamental idea behind recent proposals for developing the Northern territory, which is a half million square miles in area, or more than four times the size of the British Isles. Concessions to private enterprise are one way of testing the development of this area. The Labour Party would doubtless prefer the traditional method of direct governmental development, and would like to extend government enterprise to other forms of production.

The problem of federal relations raises even more important issues. Australia is a federation with six States. Certain powers are reserved for the Commonwealth Parliament, and the States exercise all others, much on the plan laid down in the United States Constitution. As is usual in a Federation, the powers of

the Federal Parliament and Government steadily increased. Federations always tend to revolve round the centre. The Labour Party is a strong advocate of federal power, of unification. The Country Party would like to see some new States created, with perhaps reduced powers in general to the States, somewhat on the lines of the Canadian and South African Constitutions. In this case also the Nationalist Party occupies a middle position. But even if no fundamental changes are made in the Constitution, there are adjustments to be made in the relations of the States and the Commonwealth. Australia is a vast territory embracing many and diverse economic areas. Some States hold that federal legislation has operated harshly upon them while benefiting other States. In particular, Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania cite the tariff, the Navigation Act and the Arbitration Court as discriminating against them largely in favour of New South Wales and Victoria. Why should this be so? Take Western Australia, which is nearly 2,000 miles from the East and is dependent upon the export of primary products and minerals. The tariff raises the price of her industrial products. The Arbitration Court fixes wages for manufacturing industries in the East that add to the costs of her purchases. It also has power to determine wages and working conditions in State enterprises. Finally, the Navigation Act prevents overseas shipping from competing in the inter-State trade unless a special licence is granted. In vain the Commonwealth points to the long East-West Railway completed during the War, to the special grants Western Australia has received from the Commonwealth, and to the substantial loan moneys that have been made available to the State in recent years. Western Australia is dissatisfied with the working of the Federation at present. She is less dependent on the Eastern States for markets than are the other two States that voice similar grievances. Doubtless this fact, and her isolation in the West, is responsible for the secessionist movement which culminated in a large popular vote last May on a referendum on secession. Be that as it may, the adjustment of federal policy to conditions in the less favoured States is to come up for a review in a special Con-

(Continued on page 676)



Modern art in the modern room—carvings by Barbara Hepworth and paintings and fabrics by Ben Nicholson

Photographs by Paul Laib

Art

Artists Indoors

By ANTHONY BERTRAM

WE escape to our rooms. They are our refuge from the din of a civilisation that is running badly. To soothe our grated nerves we must be hermits in the evening. Therefore, like a hermitage, our rooms must be simple. In the late centuries, when life was simple, when the world's house was in order, men could be happy in crowded and ornate rooms which were a contrast. Now it is a man's house that must be in order. The eyes must find rest in untroubled spaces, in bare walls and easily apprehended shapes of furniture, in quiet colours, whites and pastel tones that slide together without violent adjustments of our retinas. Escaping from a world of competitive over-production we need a room that contains nothing unnecessary, nothing too large or too complicated for its purpose, no objects competing with one another.

What is necessary in a room—in a living-room, for example? Floor-covering, curtains, comfortable chairs, some form of heating, some form of lighting, books, a source of music, a table or so, ashtrays. Why more? Why any ornaments that have to be dusted? Corbusier has said that a room is a machine to live in. Is what I have suggested sufficient for living? No, because living is not only sitting down, reading, smoking and listening to reproduced music. Living, living fully, also includes indulging the eyes with positive pleasure. The restfulness of absolute functional simplicity is negative. Once rested, our eyes seek stimulus. That stimulus is supplied by the beauty of material, the unnecessarily choice woods of which our furniture is made, and also by the ornamentation of our room, the pattern of rugs and upholstery, the pictures, the sculpture and the flowers.

It is with the introduction of these things that the real difficulty of interior decoration begins. A most delicate adjustment is required to satisfy this need of visual stimulus without

cheating the primary need of rest. Therefore the patterns which we apply to utilitarian objects must also be simple and in harmony with their intrinsic forms, and the non-utilitarian objects must be few and carefully chosen. They, too, must be in harmony. Therefore the men who make them, the artists, must make them for the room. A few years ago the artists were out of touch with the room. They painted what pleased them without considering the ultimate use of their pictures. They thought no further than the gallery walls. Now all that is changed. Artists no longer confine themselves to pictures conceived and executed in a vacuum. They design all kinds of objects for the room. Pictures are but one of the things they make: pictures no longer stand apart priggishly unrelated to life, Fine Art not to be considered in relation to anything so workaday as a room.

I do not mean by this that pictures are merely decorative, of no more significance than a chair, but I mean that they also are inanimate servants of man fulfilling a social function, parts of the room, like the bookcase or the radiogram, which serve on a higher plane than the chair.

Artists, recognising this, have wisely decided that it is not beneath their dignity to supply some of the lower servants also in order that they may worthily support the upper servants; besides, it is fun making lower servants. The applying of paint to canvas is not in itself a nobler work than the designing of rugs or curtain materials. The artist may find his fullest expression by designing the whole room in which his picture is merely *primus inter pares*, the centrepiece which cannot be worthily appreciated if its setting is not also the work of an artist.

Among the most distinguished English artists who have recognised this fact are Barbara Hepworth and Ben Nicholson, who are at present holding an exhibition at the Lefèvre



Composition by Barbara Hepworth (1933)

Galleries (1A King Street, St. James's). It is an exhibition of objects created for interior decoration. Some of those objects are pictures—that is, they are painted in oils on canvas and framed—others sculpture—that is, carved chunks of wood or marble—but others cannot be so easily labelled. Nicholson has stuck things on to canvas sometimes—bits of glass or what-not—and he has painted inside boxes or on odd shaped panels which, unframed, can stand on the mantelpiece as some people stand Persian tiles; Miss Hepworth has made designs cut out of graph paper—collages, as they are called. They have printed their designs on cotton or had them woven into rugs. And none of these designs are representations of nature.

What does all this mean? Why don't these artists depict nature, giving us little glimpses of the country to remind us of our holidays or depict pretty female faces to tickle our sex instincts, or depict episodes from Roman history to educate us and inculcate virtue? Why must they make patterns of dots and lines and masses that we can't recognise?

How we like to recognise things! What a resistance we put up to anything new! Provided B is like dear old A we are happy about B; and if C comes along and is like both of them then we are quite comfortable. But why the likeness of A, B and C should be a merit in them we never stop to think. Why should the object which we call a picture be like something we have seen before? It usually will be, more or less, and there is no reason why it shouldn't; but is there any reason why it should? We do not demand that a chair should be like a human being or a tree or apples on a plate. We are perfectly happy about St. Paul's Cathedral although it does not resemble some bearded old gentleman whom we might fancy to be like St. Paul. Why, if we are satisfied to set on Ludgate Hill an object four hundred and four feet high composed of non-natural forms, can't we hang on our walls quite a small object composed of non-natural forms? And isn't it indeed quite reasonable to do so? The objects of which our room is already necessarily composed have non-natural forms. Our chairs do not remind us of our summer holidays; our tables have no sex-appeal; our sideboards do not recount an elevating tale of Roman virtue.

Since we feel the need to adorn the bare structure of our room we add pictures and patterned textiles and ceramics: but it is surely quite logical, at least permissible, that these adornments should partake of the character of what is already in the room, that is to say, be as non-representational as our chairs, tables and sideboards. Perhaps our chairs already have some decoration; if so, then it is certainly not naturalistic though the forms of which it is composed may be borrowed from nature and adapted to decorative purposes. So in the pictures by Nicholson and the sculpture by Miss Hepworth you may trace hints and memories of natural forms as the capital of the Corinthian column recalls the acanthus leaf.

These artists, in short, have created especially with the room in view, the room which is a non-figurative arrangement. They have made objects which require no reference to outside. They

do not seek to bring blowing into the room that celebrated breath of the great out-of-doors which is so grossly ill-suited there. They compose in and for the great indoors, where most of our lives is spent.

And notice one other thing. How quiet is Ben Nicholson's colouring. It is true that here and there a spot of bright red may be introduced as an accent in a restrained scheme constructed almost in monochrome (16, for example) but without such accents quietness might degenerate into dullness, restraint into drabness. Or, as in 19, he may be gay but his gaiety is simple, the colours clean, the forms definite. Such gaiety is like the laughter of children.

It is a mistake to imagine that these abstract artists are highly sophisticated over-civilised decadent creatures. On the contrary. They refuse to take art with the dreary solemnity of an academic pedant. They say 'You want something to hang on your walls, something to stand on your mantelpiece, something that will fit into a room, something that will stimulate your imagination and not merely titillate your memory. Very well, here's paint, here's paper, here's glass and stone and wool, here are all sorts of jolly things. Let's follow our fancy and make a pattern with these, as children do or as men did long ago in an easier age before they were weighed down with a learned tradition of mimetic painting. Let us, for goodness sake, find some way in this cramped world to be fancy-free, to express those primitive but profound yearnings of the subconscious for rhythm, rhythm for its own sake; let us follow the impulse that makes the slum child improvise dances to the street organ, dances that have more beauty and enduring significance than the ephemeral antics of the financiers and politicians or than the materialist labours of the naturalistic



Paintings by Ben Nicholson (1933)

painter who can find nothing better to do with his art than to repeat on canvas what the physical eye records. Let us, in your room, supply a stimulus through the eye to the imagination.

And if you don't think this serious, if you think the imagination is a toy beneath your notice, well, you are entitled to your opinion but not to an opinion on art. Stick to your materialism and decorate your room with photographs and the lists of fat stock prices. If you think it is childish to be childlike then your kingdom is of this earth; but the kingdom of art is for those who can recover the fresh vision of a child, a vision of gaiety or sorrow that outlasts all civilisations and economic systems, a vision that can find expression by dancing with colours and lines to whatever music moves in the artist's imagination.

God and the World through Christian Eyes—XX

The Christian and His Neighbour

By the Rev. Professor C. E. RAVEN

THE connection between the love of God and the love of our neighbour is often denied and more often misunderstood. There are some who seem to regard their duty towards God and their duty towards their neighbour as quite separate: we all know good Christians who are unneighbourly and good neighbours who are unchristian—men and women whose worship of God seems to have no bearing upon their conduct, and men and women whose conduct, often admirably altruistic, seems to involve no need for worship. Indeed, this divorce between religion in the narrower sense and life in terms of character is perhaps the greatest source of present weakness both to the Church and to the world.

For if you think it out, you will find that these two are not really two, but one, that a real experience of God inevitably results in a radical change in our attitude towards our fellow-men, and that, conversely, a genuine love of our neighbours springs from, or is accompanied by, an experience of the eternal worth of human beings, of the essential unity of the universe, and of wonder and worship. We can in fact test the genuineness of our adoration by its effects upon our behaviour to our fellows, and the genuineness of our love for them by its power to set us free from self-centredness and fill us with the spirit of adoration. When Plato taught that the love of a single person leads on to the love of all, and the love of all leads on to the love of God, he was affirming the truth expressed by St. John when he wrote 'If we love one another, God dwelleth in us'.

Worship is Man's Characteristic Achievement

Will you think this out in the light of your own highest memories? You have all known moments when in the presence of a beautiful landscape, at sunset or on the sea or under the stars, you felt the 'presence' that Wordsworth describes, when the opaque world became transparent and aglow, when every common bush was afire with God. That is worship. On a higher level you have all felt the same revelation in human beings, when, in face of the heroism, the love and suffering of men and women, your eyes were opened, and you saw them caught up into and transfigured by an unearthly and abiding splendour. That is worship. On a higher level still some of you have found in the words and example of Christ, in realised communion with Him, in the fellowship of His Church, a manifest unveiling of the eternal and you 'saw God'. That is worship. I am not describing something rare and eccentric. Such experience in different degrees is, I believe, common to all normal human beings; and is indeed the essential quality that makes them human. For man has as his distinguishing mark the power of self-consciousness, the power to contemplate the universe, to experience unity in diversity, to realise the changeless within and beyond the changing. Worship, not wisdom nor craftsmanship nor laughter, is man's characteristic achievement.

Now if you can remember any such moment in your own lives, you will also remember that it changed, for the time at least, your whole relationship to the world and to your fellows. You got a fresh vision of them and of yourself along with them, seeing them no longer selfishly from the standpoint of your own egoism, but in the light of the eternal as comrades and partners, as members of a family. You saw them as it were from a distance and yet with an intimate sensitiveness and sympathy—and not only those whom you had liked but those whom you had hated or ignored. Antagonism gave way to compassion, contempt to appreciation, the desire to exploit to the desire to help. You and they alike were little people handicapped by deformities, blinded by ignorance, betrayed by weakness of purpose—lost, but how lovable; prodigals but how pathetic; rebels but how mistaken and how redeemable! You knew them as your neighbours, and, like the Good Samaritan, you could no longer pass by on the other side. I believe that every true experience of worship inevitably involves a love of mankind. If religion is on the one side adoration, it is on the other service or neighbourliness. Conversely,

a right attitude towards one's neighbour inevitably involves, however much we refuse to acknowledge it, an experience of worship and a discovery of God.

If, as we have claimed, all men possess the capacity for worship, and all worship is accompanied by neighbourliness, yet on the one side religion is neither universal nor united, and on the other the earth is full of exploitation and hatred, and each one of us is prone to selfishness which denies both the love of God and the love of man. It seems as if our theory did not fit the facts. Is it only a dream, a fantasy, a refuge from a too painful reality? Before agreeing to such a conclusion, we must look at the question more closely. Though there is strong evidence that man's sense of the sacred, which some call worship and some the emergence of the eternal and some the fact of God, is universal, there is obviously wide and deep-seated difference in the interpretation of this experience. One of the greatest of modern philosophical books, Dr. John Oman's *The Natural and the Supernatural*, shows in detail how this sense of the sacred has been explained in a long series of religions, and how this explanation is coloured by and determines man's relation to the world around him and to his fellows. If all religion has its origin in a common experience, this experience, because it is concerned with the infinite, has to be expressed in symbols, and these symbols can only be drawn from current ideas and the local and contemporary environment. Hence creeds and codes of conduct—creeds to describe God, codes to fix behaviour. Creed and code, though not always consistently developed, should express the same general outlook: they should 'hang together'; for each has a common origin.

The Fruit of the Spirit

Now the Christian, as the first series of these lectures has shown, has his own characteristic creed and philosophy, a creed centred upon his belief in Christ as the unique interpretation, the perfect symbol, of the eternal. His code is equally characteristic, and springs directly out of his creed. What is it? It might be enough to answer by another reference to the Parable of the Good Samaritan. When Jesus was asked, 'Who is my neighbour?' He told this story, and added the words 'Go and do thou likewise', that is 'Go and be neighbourly'. But to show the connection between worship and character St. Paul's description may be added. 'The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering (or fortitude), gentleness (or courtesy), goodness, faith, meekness (or humility), temperance (or self-mastery)'. For him the experience of God, the influence of the Spirit, resulted in a character of this sort. I remember once asking a form of schoolboys to write down a list of the qualities which they most admired, and then setting them in order according to the number of times that each occurred on the lists. The boys were typically English, and the result was a fair description of the best sort of Englishmen. In some points it overlapped with St. Paul's list: but its emphasis was totally different. Try the experiment for yourselves and see how it works out in your own case. The striking thing about St. Paul's list is that it represents the man who has been set free from selfishness and has caught the Spirit of Christ. His list represents what the old-fashioned would call the 'converted' life, the life that is centred no longer upon self-regard, but upon God, as God is revealed in Christ. 'Love, joy, peace' are the qualities that spring from self-surrender; love which is not sentimentality, but a deep and wise and selfless sympathy; joy which is not pleasure nor happiness, but wonder and appreciation and hope; peace which is not passivity, but confidence and steadfastness and an integrated harmony of effort. Without such qualities, is there any fullness of life for the individual, any security for society, any prospect of betterment, any true neighbourliness? And such qualities are the fruit of the Spirit, the outcome of an experience of God in Christ.

It is from the personal relationship of the Christian to God in Christ that this distinctive quality of Christian neighbourliness is derived. As a neighbour his dealings with his fellows

are not dictated by obedience to law: law always generalises, or as the legal maxim goes, 'law can take no account of hard cases' since 'hard cases make bad law'. For Christ and for the Christian every case (our own included) is a hard case; and every individual must be treated as a person with the peculiarities, the special and distinctive genius, of a person. The art of Christian living cannot be reduced to a system of hard and fast rules—though such rules may have their use: it cannot be mechanical or artificial: it must be the spontaneous and sensitive expression of a right relationship to others, of a vital sympathy with them, a vital co-operation which refuses to compel or to exploit, but loves and trusts and encourages and helps.

Such neighbourliness is far more than a mere sentiment of good-fellowship. We all know cheery souls whose motto is 'keep smiling'; amiable folks who take life as it comes, get on well with everybody and believe in having a good time themselves and giving a good time to their pals; hearty fellows who smack you on the back and exhort you to buck up. In these days of depression such cheerfulness has its value: the optimist is a better citizen than the pessimist: he is also a better Christian. But if such cheerfulness shuts its eyes to the tragedy of life, if when faced with unemployment or war or prostitution it can only shrug its shoulders and tell you that these things always have been and always will be, then it becomes not only irritating but shallow and false and pernicious. This world is not paradise, and such people would make it a paradise of fools. When St. Paul speaks of love and joy and peace, he is preaching not the religion of the good fellow, but of Christ crucified.

Christian Neighbourliness

Christian neighbourliness is made of sterner stuff. For Christianity is a religion of redemption. The Christian must love before he can serve; but his love is a sham unless it results in a passionate activity of service. He cannot be a neighbour unless he shares the sorrows and adds to the joys of others; unless he faces continually the pain of his own and other men's evil and works continually for its overcoming. 'To raise right up, to crush the power of wrong' must be not only his hobby but his life. There is a point here that needs examination. Love comes first. It is only if we love other people, are interested in them, believe in them, enjoy them, that we can or have any right to help them. One of the reasons why so many people dislike the parson is because they think he only wants to do them good, to save their souls or mould their characters, that he doesn't really care for them as human beings. If this was true, then their dislike would be natural and just. It is wrong to exploit a man even for his own good, wrong to shape a human being as if you were a potter and he a lump of dead clay. No gardener is fit to prune and train his plants unless he cares for them and understands their nature, and wants to help them grow. Love must come first, as Jesus taught us when He said to Peter, 'Do you love Me?' before telling him to feed His sheep.

If we love, then there can be no question of outraging another's personality or trying to cajole or to compel him. Love, as every lover knows, is exquisitely sensitive to the quality of its friend, knows and trusts the best in him, understands and forgives the worst. But if it is real love, it passionately resents what thwarts and spoils his life and does its uttermost to set him free to develop fuller powers and reach up to a larger stature. It wants him to become his true self, not a pale copy of someone else, to find scope for achievement, to triumph over weakness and to conquer temptation. But as the example of Jesus proves, it can only use love's way. Nothing is more evident in the records of Jesus than His patience with the blindness of His disciples, His refusal to compel obedience, His willingness to be rejected and crucified. 'I call you not slaves, but friends'. To treat a man as a slave even for his own good is to fall away from Christ's religion.

Now, if this sounds obvious, you will recognise that it is enormously difficult and in fact revolutionary. Every parent and every teacher knows that his hardest task is to be willing for love's sake to stand aside and allow the child to be itself. We see the dangers: we feel the responsibility. It is so easy to work to a pattern, to impose our own ideas, to treat the home or the school as if it were a factory for turning out standard goods—as if human beings were sausages or mass-

produced cars. Every citizen in these days must know how attractive some sort of dictatorship or compulsion seems; how dangerous is liberty; how natural it is to treat society as if it were a great machine and men and women just cogs upon its wheels. Difficult? It sometimes seems as if the whole problem of life was how to combine freedom for individual growth with efficiency of corporate life, whether in the family or in the State or in the Church. Christian neighbourliness, which is committed to the task of redeeming the world by love, demands a revolution in our thinking and in our actions—a revolution which every man who has known friendship will desire.

Scope of Christian Service

If our Christian life is one of fellowship in service, our creed defines for us the general scope of our neighbourliness. If God be our Father, then not only are we kinsmen within the one family, but that family embraces humanity without discrimination. In one of the most tremendous of His sayings Jesus overthrows the whole Jewish concept of a chosen people and of specially favoured individuals by appealing to the fact which most of us find difficult, the awful impartiality of nature. That God 'makes His sun to rise upon the good and upon the evil and sends rain upon the just and the unjust', is at once the ground on which we are bidden to love our enemies and the proof of that love's perfection. To the Christian neighbour there is 'neither Greek nor Jew, bond nor free, male nor female'; the ancient barriers of race, class and sex no longer justify exclusiveness. 'Colour bars', class snobbishness, sex-prejudice are evils to be transcended in the blessed community.

If God is uniquely revealed in Jesus and the Son of Man is the Incarnate Son of God, then human personality must be for the Christian the 'value of values'. He will be a good neighbour as he learns that man's life 'does not consist in the multitude of the things that he possesses'. He will in the strict sense of the words be no 'respector of persons'—that is, he will disregard the external marks of status, money, clothes, accent, and will no longer see others as means to his own advancement or exploit them in his own interest. Men and women will become for him ends in themselves, ends whose full development is to be reached as their lives are freed from enslavement to compulsion and fear, freed for the service of God which alone is perfect freedom. We all know how complete a change friendship can bring into human contacts. This man was not long ago a stranger to me: I resented his manners, despised his outlook, criticised his defects, ignored the subtle quality of his personality. Now he is my friend: I understand and appreciate the angles of his character, see him no longer in caricature but as a living whole, enjoy him, trust him, admire him—and so can perhaps help him to grow.

If God is also the Spirit, the Holy One, then appreciation for one's neighbours as friends will be deepened into reverence for them as possessing an eternal and God-inspired quality. Religion is perhaps in some danger of losing its sense of the abiding and deathless worth of human beings; for not only have we lost something of our grip upon the doctrine of immortality, but we do not dare to rise to that sense of the divine possibilities of mankind, of man's dignity as not only made in God's image but the temple of His Spirit and a member in His body, which we find in the New Testament. Only as the Christian discovers in his fellows a seed of eternal life can he feel that evil is not only a tragedy but an outrage. It is his business to be sensitive to the evidence of the presence of the Spirit of God in the lives of others. If friendship transforms our attitude, still more does this recognition of the divine. Many of you will no doubt remember times in which, in people whom you had ignored or feared or despised, you suddenly saw revealed a touch of God. I shall never forget how one Sunday in rest-billets in France, on my way to a Church service I passed a man whose brutal speech and animal passions had scared and repelled me. He was sitting outside his billet surrounded by tiny French children with one of them climbing on to his shoulder. His face was transfigured; and I caught a trace of the Christ. There is a soft spot, a point of access to the eternal, in all of us, choked up with selfishness, made callous by greed and fear: but if we would be neighbours it is our business to recognise and enlarge it. 'Who then was neighbour to him that fell among the thieves?' If we answer 'He that showed mercy upon him', we must be prepared to accept the command 'Go and do thou likewise'.

Musical Views Enlarged

High Lights in Opera

By ERIC BLOM

'We may here establish as a fact, once and for all, that, in the whole of opera, the genuinely moving, heart-stirring passages, that move us to tears, as distinguished from those which carry us away and uplift us, can be reckoned on the fingers of our two hands: among them are Lohengrin's farewell, Sieglinde's dawning consciousness of motherhood, Eva's outburst in the shoemaker's shop, and the 'Wach auf!' in the third act of 'Die Meistersinger', Kurwenal's exultant song when Tristan regains his consciousness, followed by the latter's death, the Minister's address in 'Fidelio': 'Euch, edle Frau, allein', the trio in 'Der Rosenkavalier' and the hush that falls before it, and possibly, too, Don José's terrible despair at his shame, degradation and helpless love—with perhaps a few more. I may, for the moment, have overlooked some passages of this kind; but at any rate, it is no small thing that two or three of these ten supreme examples of pathos come from Puccini's hand'*

FOR the third time within three years a work by that bright Viennese musical *feuilletoniste*, Richard Specht, has come out in an English translation. In 1930 we had his book on *Brahms*†; quite recently the translation of his *Bildnis Beethovens*, the last work of the late Alfred Kalisch, published under the title of *Beethoven as He Lived*‡, made its appearance; and now we have his lively book on Puccini, admirably presented from every point of view. Mrs. Alison Phillips is to be congratulated on an English version that represents Specht adequately without reproducing the most glaring of his mannerisms, which could not have failed to prove the ruin of any kind of civilised English style.

Richard Specht was—as a literary figure, I mean—a personality who at once attracts and irritates his readers. He was a keen observer and a keener gossip. His insight was shrewd; the conclusions drawn from what he saw are nothing if not picturesque at best and sensational at worst. It may be imagined that his super-journalistic methods were not exactly suited to the subject of Beethoven, though it must be said that there are things in his book on that master which show a kind of instinctive penetration that is remarkable. With Brahms he did a great deal better, precisely because the subject was not particularly suited to his ways. It restrained him enough for once not to allow his exuberance to run away with it altogether. But this was a heroic effort, and it is here, with Puccini, that he is at last quite at his ease. He uses as his motto a line from Hugo Wolf's *Italian Song Book*: 'Auch kleine Dinge können uns entzücken' ('Small things, too, have power to charm us'), and in both the smallness and the charm of Puccini he has found his perfect match. His chatty, lively, keenly appreciative manner of telling stories of life and of art is the very thing for the delineation of a composer whose music, too, relies on this quick seizing on the superficial and on its presentation with plenty of gusto and astute feeling for what is apt to please and interest us immediately.

The extract quoted above is given partly in order to show how ready Specht is to make a point that engages our attention without being capable of penetrating anywhere below the surface of our apprehension. We have only to compare our own operatic experiences with the author's to find that he has not really considered his statement. Which brings me to my second reason for confronting the reader with this slice from his book. What are the real high lights in opera? Or, more relevantly, what are the most poignant passages we can think of?

After a moment's reflection it becomes evident, first of all, that no two people will agree to the same ten high lights. (Let us for the present accept Specht's small number, which serves the argument as well as any other.) But it should at least be clear what exactly it is that makes, to our minds, the poignancy of this or that operatic passage, and, obviously, Specht did not decide even so much as that. Was he thinking of the dramatic situation or merely of the musical quality of the passages in question? Nobody can tell. He seems, in fact, deliberately to confuse the issue by being sometimes arrested by the one and sometimes by the other. Lohengrin's farewell, Sieglinde's motherhood and Don José's despair would be just as touching with other music and almost as much so with no music at all. I can quite easily think of other *musical* incidents in the parts of these three characters which are infinitely more moving. Let me mention only Sieglinde's reference to Wotan in the first act of 'The Valkyrie', when she speaks of him as the bringer of 'sorrow and solace in one'. To the musician, that is one of the most gripping moments in the whole of the 'Ring'. Again, the Minister's address in 'Fidelio' is dramatically touching,

certainly: he asks Leonore to relieve her husband of his chains herself. But the music that accompanies this goes for next to nothing compared with the grave-digging duet or the cry 'First kill his wife!' in the second act, one at least of which I should certainly have selected to dispose of a finger or two, if I had thought of 'Fidelio' at all.

Then again, is Specht thinking of a mere flash of inspiration or of a sustained piece of writing? He takes it upon himself to include both, which is hardly calculated to consolidate his assertion. One may talk collectively of ten eggs in one basket, but not of a heterogeneous assortment of all kinds of objects that cannot possibly be included in one single description. The *Fidelio* incident and 'Wach auf!' are momentary high lights, the 'Rosenkavalier', 'Tristan' and 'Carmen' episodes mentioned are long stretches of illumination. However, that would pass if Specht were not thinking of drama, but of music, for there the flash of inspiration may shine before us a moment or extend itself over a long period, during which the composer's imagination continues to work at the highest pressure. The spark and the steady flame have the same origin and are fed by the same substance.

But now, if Specht had really meant musical high lights—and logically he could not have done anything else in talking of a species of dramatic art that justifies itself by music alone—he would certainly have found his two hands far too short of fingers to hold all the truly poignant passages that stir us in opera. If he could spare two or three for Puccini alone, how could he do justice to Mozart, who is not included in his list at all? Surely even to his superficial view Pamina's attempt at suicide in the 'Magic Flute' ought to have presented itself at once. Perhaps, though, it is among the possible 'few more' which he says he may have overlooked for the moment.

On purely musical grounds I feel I can pass only the two 'Meistersinger' passages in Specht's list. Eva's outburst is certainly one of the *musical* high lights that never fail to bring me near tears. (The reader will forgive my speaking for myself alone: I do so because Specht set me the example and also because each hearer must, after all, make his own choice.) For Wagner I have already added the cadence in Sieglinde's story of Wotan, and I could, of course, go on, though I should not extend my search to any work earlier than 'Rhinegold'. As for Mozart, there is no end:—the Countess' 'Porgi amor', Donna Elvira's 'Mi tradi', Pamina's lament in G minor, Costanza's in the same key—one had better not begin. And what of Desdemona's 'Emilia, addio' in Verdi's 'Othello'? This, it may be objected, is a *dramatically* moving moment. True, but I am definitely thinking of it now as a musical incident of an extraordinarily stirring power. Verdi's use of what appears to be merely an ordinary Italian cadence just at that instant and in that context is one of the great strokes of genius in all opera, and of purely musical genius at that.

It would have been very interesting to know what the two or three Puccini instances are which Specht had in mind. I hope that one of them might be that delicious little movement in the Yamadori scene in 'Butterfly' which passes in a few bars and is never referred to again, but is quite astonishingly suggestive and spontaneous a piece of invention, as well as touching in its playfulness just at that juncture of the drama. What else? Gluck's 'Che farò', so serene and yet so poignant a plaint, the more so because it is in a major key. But one could go on and on. Truly, if three such points are conceded to Puccini, the high lights in Mozart, in Wagner, in Verdi, in scores of other operatic composers, and not only the greatest among them, could be counted on the ten fingers of a hundred critics.

**Giuseppe Puccini: The Man, his Life, his Work*. By Richard Specht. Translated by Catherine Alison Phillips. Dent, 10s. 6d. Page 145. †Dent, 21s. ‡Macmillan, 15s.

*English Music—V**English Songs*

By Dr. THOMAS ARMSTRONG

IMAGINE yourself a member of an Elizabethan household. A new collection of madrigals 'apt for voice or viols' has just arrived; and you wish to try them over on your quartet of viols: unfortunately the treble viol is out of action, so you ask one of the ladies to sing the soprano part, while the lower parts are played on alto, tenor and bass viols. In this way you try over the new music; and in doing so you invent a new art-form, that of the solo song with instrumental accompaniment. This was doubtless one of the ways in which the solo song began to develop, though there had been for centuries all kinds of experiments, and simpler, less 'studied' songs, like those of the scalds and minstrels. In the British Museum is a volume of thirty-three songs attributed to Henry VIII: and a very famous example of earlier English song is the 'Agincourt Song', which was written in 1415 in celebration of that victory. Its composer is not known, but the tune is one of great virility and exaltation, which tells us something very definite about the people who produced it. It is not quite a folk-song, not quite a ballad, and is in one of the old church modes, which seems to add to its strength.

Once they had discovered the charm of this form, the lutenist composers soon explored its possibilities, and it became widely popular; for it allowed the singer to express his own personal feelings in a more intimate way than ever before, and it enabled him to match very closely the rhythms and accents of poetry, an aspect of the art in which cultured people at that time were strongly interested. The most famous song-composers of this period were Dowland, Campion, Rosseter, Ford, and Robert Jones; and some of their songs are works of great perfection and beauty. Unfettered as they were by the rigidity of the subsequent bar system, they achieved within their own limits a subtlety of expression that has not been surpassed. Dowland, certainly, may rank with Schubert and Wolf as one of the world's really great song writers.

With the Restoration composers, and under the influence of Lully's tunes, some of this flexibility was lost. Milton in a famous sonnet praised Henry Lawes because he

'First taught our English Musick how to span
Words with just note and accent'.

But when we compare Lawes' songs with those of the lutenists, Milton's praise is hard to justify. Even Purcell's setting of words is sometimes open to criticism for its excessive repetition. But when Purcell really strikes his true vein he is superb

in his power of finding a musical phrase that exactly suggests the emotional meaning of a verbal one. And his melody has splendid power and sweep. No composer is always at his best level: Bach wrote some dull music, and Beethoven some poor music; and Purcell had his lapses too: but there are three or



Youth playing a lute—engraving by Wenceslaus Hollar (1607-1677)
British Museum

four songs at least of his that may claim a place among the world's great music. And he was not the only one: his contemporary, Blow, could rise to real beauty as well.

In the eighteenth century our 'official' composers produced little memorable song. Some of Arne's stand out as honourable exceptions, and there are fine solos among the anthems of Greene and Boyce. But the real stream of English song was flowing through other channels, and it is in the popular songs of the day that our nation was expressing itself. 'Pretty Polly Oliver', the lovely 'Farewell, Manchester', 'Golden Slumbers', 'The Vicar of Bray', some songs of Henry Carey, who wrote 'Sally in Our Alley'—such tunes as these have spontaneity and character, and sometimes rise to real distinction. On the whole, they better deserve survival than the works of professional composers like Jackson, Braham and Horn. Sir Henry Bishop's songs, like 'Should he Upbraid' and 'Bid me Discourse' have a definite interest as period pieces, but are not after all very distinguished music.

The old eminence began to return with Sullivan, whose most important gifts to English music were his demonstration that England had definitely not lost for good the ability to produce her own music, and his great gift for word-setting. His handling of Gilbert's ingeni-



Family concert—engraving by Elias Martin (1740-1811)

British Museum

ous rhythms was masterly. One could give a dozen examples of a most felicitous touch whose lightness is the art of a fine craftsman, and whose ease is perfection of technique. Some of his early songs like the beautiful 'Orpheus with his Lute' were important landmarks in our music. He brought our language again into close alliance with music, and made it easier for two later and outstanding writers—Parry and Stanford—to raise English song to its old level. Both these composers wrote one or two songs of the very highest quality: and so did Charles Wood with his 'Ethiopia', and Arthur Somervell with 'Maud' and the beautiful 'Shropshire Lad' songs.

What these men did, apart from their actual musical achievement, was to remould the technique of English song-writing and develop among musicians a more sensitive attitude to the poetry they set. And between them and the present day came another strong influence, that of English folk-song. This stream of purely native music had flowed all through the centuries, but had not forced itself upon the notice of musicians who had not time to search for it. In the last century, under the pressure

of social changes and quicker transport, it was being lost altogether. Songs that our great-grandfathers knew well were being forgotten, until a handful of workers, among whom Cecil Sharp is specially remembered, took down hundreds of them

from the lips of old singers who had learnt them from their parents. It soon became clear that we had a splendid body of folk-music, as strong in character as it was reticent in style. This realisation and the music itself were a great inspiration to our composers. Then, again, in recent years attention has been turned back to the Elizabethan songs with their subtlety of rhythm and phrase. Both these forces have influenced present-day song-writers in one way and another, and today we have a body of English song of which we may well be proud. Vaughan Williams, Peter Warlock, Ireland, Quilter, Howells, Bridge, Ernest Walker,

Butterworth, Armstrong Gibbs, Moeran, Hamilton Harty—all these and others have written songs characteristically English in style and feeling and of undeniable beauty. It is an honourable contribution to modern European music.



Two country singers, preservers of our folk-songs
By courtesy of the English Folk-song Society

Electricity and Architecture

THE CURRENT ISSUE of *The Architectural Review* (Architectural Press, 2s. 6d.) contains a comprehensive survey of what is being done today to develop the use of electricity in habitable buildings, public and private. In spite of the fact that this represents only one part of the field covered by the plan to provide Great Britain with complete electricity services, *The Architectural Review* may be congratulated on providing not only an extraordinarily comprehensive and interesting account of the subject to which it has limited itself, but also a valuable outline of the progress of the electricity plan as a whole. The survey, which comprises over fifty pages profusely illustrated with photographs and diagrams in the Neurath style, begins by drawing attention to the economic revolution which electricity is bringing about. We are shown how far Britain has lagged behind other countries hitherto in developing an electricity service for transport, factory and domestic purposes. Then comes a short analysis of the plans of the Central Electricity Board, illustrated by maps which show how power is being distributed regionally through the country. The shortcomings of regional planning as it has progressed so far are not minimised, and a special analysis is given of planning in the North-West region, to show exactly what the difficulties are and how to surmount them. Thereafter, the number deals with electricity from the architect's point of view, introduced by a discussion between Sinclair Wood and John Glog. New methods of lighting and heating are explained, and a section is devoted to the part which electricity can play in slum clearance and housing work. Attention is also paid to the electrification of the factory, and figures are given to show in which counties factory building is proceeding most rapidly today and to which branches of industry electrification is most readily applicable. We recommend listeners who are following Mr. Julian Huxley's scientific talks, or those who intend to follow the industrial survey to be broadcast by Professor John Hilton after Christmas, to try and get hold of this number of *The Architectural Review*, which is not only stimulating to read at the present moment but worth keeping for future reference, as nothing so comprehensive on this subject has yet been made available for public consumption.



Map of the Grid System of electrical distribution, as reproduced from *The Architectural Review*



Part of an Elizabethan table cover depicting the life of a country gentleman.

Victoria and Albert Museum

*The National Character—V**The English Squire*

By ARTHUR BRYANT

FOR four centuries the squires directed the history of England. In nearly every village their great houses dominated the English landscape, just as in a previous age the abbeys of their predecessors had done. And during most of that time—from the reign of William III to the reign of Queen Victoria—they ruled not only their own villages but England too. During that time the two committees of country gentlemen, called the House of Commons and the House of Lords, guided by another committee of country gentlemen called the Cabinet, had things entirely their own way.

And I think on the whole it is true to say that they ruled England fairly well: in the early days of their power one might almost say very well. Not only did the wealth and power of the country expand under their rule, but the people accepted their leadership cheerfully, which is probably the best test of any government. The English have never been very easy to govern, and in those days they were famed for their roughness and love of fighting. But, in spite of this and though there was no police force, practically no one thought of challenging the right of the squires to rule.

Now I think this was due to the fact that the old-fashioned squire was really representative of the ordinary Englishman of his day. He wasn't elected to govern by popular vote like a modern legislator, but he did happen to represent the tastes, habits and interests of the people he governed: and he did so for the best of all reasons, because he shared them. It seems to me that today it often happens that a man returned to Parliament by a mathematical majority of electors doesn't in the least share their tastes, habits and interests; he may, perhaps, disapprove of beer-drinking and horse-racing, which they love; he may read Einstein while they read an illustrated Sunday paper; he may derive his income from the import of foreign oil, while they depend on the sale of English coal. But in the seventeenth century a country squire had much the same amusements, thought much the same thoughts and obtained his living from much the same pursuits as the people he governed. He was, of course, somewhat better educated, decidedly richer and had more opportunities for self-expansion, but the difference between them and him was one of degree, not of kind. If they spat at table, so did he—though perhaps not so much; if they swore by the Bible, he did so too; if they lived by agriculture, so did he. He even spoke with the same kind of accent—the rough Northumberland or Sussex from which he came. In those days there was no King's English to mark the speech of a ruling caste and make folk who didn't speak it feel uncomfortable. I think that was rather a good thing. Nor, again, was the squire educated at the kind of school where nobody but young gentlemen of his own class went; on the contrary he went to the local grammar school and shared the same benches as the lads who were afterwards to be his tenants and constituents. And the result of all this was that he generally had a pretty shrewd idea of what the people of England were thinking, because he was almost certain to be thinking the same himself.

I often turn over the letters of some old squires of this school. And it is in their letters that one must seek them—there and in their stiff coloured portraits that look down on us in the houses they once inhabited—not in the caricatures of contemporary literature—the Tony Lumpkins, the Sir Wilful Witwoods, even the Sir Roger de Coverleys. And the seventeenth and eighteenth century country gentlemen left lots of letters behind them in lumber rooms and muniment rooms in country houses all over England. I want now to take just two examples of such letters: neither have ever been printed and both were written by obscure Cheshire squires living at the end of the seventeenth century. The first is from an old gentleman of three score years and ten. He is challenging a young relation (after a discussion of books and politics) to meet him at a trial of skill in field sports, and this is what he writes:

The time Lorry Booth and I have fixed on for goeing to ye Moors is Munday the twelth day of July if the weather proove favourable, wch is not yet very promiseing being cold and rainy, and bad for ye young Poets. Therefore if yu have not a Letter from me to the contrary and have ye Courage to undertake me either at Shooting, Angling or Walking (though yu have above thirty years odds on yr side) yu must be here upon Satturday the 10th day of July. But yu must not bring any Body with yu besides yr servant and a coupl of Grass Horses. Yu must also bring yr own Gun, Powder and Shott, and yr own Rod, Tackle and Grubbs, and two or 3 pair of shoes well Liquored and two or 3 pair of Stockings. Tom Yates is at London and stays there, soe the Tryall of Skill is to be, yu for yr self, Lory Booth for himself, and I for my self. Yu must also be sure to birng onely such Spaniells with yu as will hunt near yu and without chideing or calling to, for that takes off ye other Doggs and spoils ye Sport.

And here is another written by a young man of twenty-one; and, even though the subject is nothing more Homeric than the defence of beer, this also is scarcely the letter of an ill-educated bumpkin:

Dear Brother,

I am sorry to hear our Chester Ale hath so ill a report in London, but do not att all wonder att itt, by reason that Noble Liquor has so many Enemies. I mean such as cannot compass itt att so great a distance. or your Stumared Claret drinkers that lies languishing under so many Distempers and advances your Bills of Mortallity to such a Prodigious Quantity. Here we are free from any Distemper att all, unless itt be such as your selfe, that gett a heat and a cold in the Playhouse or the puny Coffy drinkers. But such as my selfe that sits still and takes a Cup of Cottingham, he is fitt for Hunting, Setting, Courseing, or any Noble Recreation, and not to stay att home in their Chambers to receive messages from the Ladyes to desire to know how they do and they hope you are no worse for staying out so late etc. These and many other Arguments I could use in Vindication of our Chester Ale, but know itt needless to urge itt to one that knowes the goodness of itt so well.

The truth is these village Lords were taught to regard learning and art as an essential equipment for life and knew how to



'The Squire Normal' (from an eighteenth-century engraving)

express themselves with force and charm. And they were fit, their minds were full of interest, they were seldom bored, they took life with both hands as it came and enjoyed it to the full. In other words, they knew how to live—and that some of you may think to be a more important thing than all the secrets of the universe put together.

Sometimes, of course, these village lords were horrid tyrants: some of them, too, were thoroughly bad hats. You remember the story of the parish clerk who, as the parson rashly began the service before the squire arrived with the usual 'When the wicked man . . .', called out, 'Please, sir, he ain't come yet'. But we mustn't make the mistake of judging the flock by the black sheep; it is always easy to take a few shocking examples and then argue that these were typical. One often hears ignorant people today saying that the English workman is an idler because a few isolated specimens have been caught abusing the Unemployment Insurance fund—but to talk like that just shows lack of balance, and, to put it bluntly, is lying. I have had to read many thousands of letters written by seventeenth and eighteenth century squires, and I can truthfully say that the vast majority are those of well-educated, well-principled and well-balanced men—not, of course, saints or geniuses or people in any way immune from the ordinary frailties of humanity, but singularly well equipped by their training and circumstances to be the leaders of a young growing nation.

Still nothing in this world is perfect—and nothing ever remains exactly as it was. And in the very eighteenth century that saw the greatest triumph of the English squires—the rising of the great houses they built themselves and the making of the treasures of art and learning with which they delighted to fill those houses—the squires began to show the first signs of losing their capacity to rule. The trouble, I think, was that they grew too rich and too powerful, and by doing so grew slack in mind: not slack in body, mark you, for the squires retained to the very end their zest for field sports, their physical courage and their glorious fitness.

But they did most of them lose something that matters very much. For as they grew richer they ceased to work, and, when they ceased to work, they ceased to think. At the beginning of

the eighteenth century the ordinary squire was still comparatively poor; he had to understand the arts of agriculture, as well as those of litigation (which in those days was a kind of branch of agriculture), and to manage his own estates with economy and industry, or he found himself—as many an idle squire did—in the inside of the Fleet Prison for debtors. And as long as he had to do that, his brain remained as fit and as active as his body, and he was qualified to govern the people who were entrusted to his hands. But with the vast increase in his rents which followed his agricultural improvements, and the enclosure of the common lands, he became so rich that he no longer bothered to manage his own affairs but handed them over to his solicitor, his banker and his agent, and devoted himself almost entirely to field sports. The result was that after a generation or two his brain went to seed. And some might argue that the people of England as a result were left without their traditional leaders, and delivered over bound to profiteers, money lenders and exploiters.

Yet for all that the squires did survive long enough to transmit into the permanent tradition of England something of the best of what they themselves stood for. It was easier for them to do so, because, unlike other aristocracies, they were never a caste: they had large families, and their younger sons, who under our English law of entail were left largely without property, became merged into the mass of the nation: most of us, I suppose, are descended somewhere from some country squire. All through our life today there runs a fine thread of public service, undertaken not for reward, but out of a sense of obligation. 'Those who have great privileges must bear great burdens' is the English definition of this spirit, or, as the French say, *Noblesse oblige*. Even in these days of specialisation, it is quite extraordinary how much public work is performed by unpaid amateurs in all classes of society, giving their time and labour, not for reward or honour, but solely out of a sense of duty. We owe it chiefly, I believe, to the traditions of our old country gentry. Whatever may be said against them, there is this to be said: that they had that sense of public service without which all human government must sooner or later become rotten. Take both sides of the medal if you like—and it is right to do so—on one side you have the Duke of Buckingham sitting as a magistrate in his own kitchen to try some poor devil of a poacher caught on his land: on the other the simple and upright squire whose epitaph that great Irishman Burke wrote: 'Immersed in the greatest affairs he never lost the ancient, native, genuine English character of a country gentleman'.



'The Squire Eccentric'. The notorious John Mytton (born 1796) sets fire to himself as a cure for hiccups

Reproduced from Edith Sitwell's 'The English Eccentrics' (Faber and Faber)

Then there is something else we partly inherit from our old country gentry—I scarcely know whether to call it a good thing or a bad. A certain rich—no, more than rich, extravagant—vein of individuality and eccentricity. I suppose really it was already there in the race—England has always been rich in eccentrics—but being a squire certainly brought it out and developed it. If you have a home of your own that no one can take from you, acres enough to support it, and a Parliament which will protect you in all you choose to say or do, you are likely to develop any little individualities of thought and action which you happen to possess. An English squire could snap his fingers at the whole world, if he chose: and he frequently did; and if this had the

drawback of often leading him to commit rather absurd follies, it had the advantage of making him original and daring. Whatever the traditional English squire was, he certainly wasn't repressed. His bold, often queer, views overflowed into all he said and did. I often think what an amusing book one could make on English squires—squires who rode bulls to hounds, squires who became Muhamadans, squires with ten thousand a year who preached radical equality without the least suspicion of how illogical they appeared, and I hope I shouldn't forget that squire who not very long ago wrote out of the blue to his small grandson: 'There are three things I hope you will not do: (1) become a Roman Catholic; (2) marry an American girl; (3) go into the House of Commons'. I particularly like the last!

There is just one other thing we owe to the English squires. All over our land are the vestiges of their former rule. If some of you argue that the ugliness of our industrial towns is the measure of their betrayal of the people they failed to protect and lead, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the ordered and gardenlike beauty of the English countryside was largely of their making. We hear a great deal today of the destruction which the modern possessor of property is doing to the beauty of England, and everywhere men are urging that the rights of property should be restricted to prevent them. No such demand was ever made to protect the English countryside from the squires, because on the whole the squires loved the countryside so well that instead of injuring it, they were always improving it—building and planting and sowing to make the English rural landscape we know today. The hands that planted those trees and laid the stones of those noble houses were those of humble English labourers, but without the directing taste and genius of our seventeenth and eighteenth century squires it is difficult to see how that work could have been performed.

Well, as I have said before, everything must come to an end. And it does seem to me that the old English country gentleman, as the word used to be understood, is dead today, or at any rate dying. When we speak of a gentleman today in the social sense, we generally mean a public school man, and, though some sense of *noblesse oblige* is certainly part of the curriculum of our public schools, I very much doubt whether a school can do the work of a manor house. I scarcely see how the public school can produce the old squire's independence, his fearlessness, his rich eccentricity of character, above all, his capacity for representing and giving effect to the ideas and prejudices of the mass of his fellow countrymen. But the word gentleman remains to us, and I suggest that discussion groups might consider what that word could and should mean. I don't mean class consciousness, or ostentation of wealth or birth, or a funny accent, or a golfing suit and a cigar—but some curious ideal which we English have made for ourselves and which we should all like to be, not to impress others, but just for the sake of being. What are those qualities—seek them out: they might in my humble opinion be part of every Englishman's birthright. And let us forget for a moment all the flummery and humbug that goes with any high ideal—all the stuff I mean about

God bless the squire and his relations
And keep us in our proper stations

—a very real complaint that many people had to make; and remember instead that it was an English gentleman who slew the slave trade, and an English gentleman who all the world over eased the lot of the prisoner and the captive, and an English gentleman who aroused the conscience of his countrymen to the evils of sweated woman and child labour, speaking, in Mr. and Mrs. Hammond's fine words, 'truth to power in its selfishness and sloth'.

The Egotistical English

Ourselves—An Essay on the National Character. By Henry W. Nevinson and Others. B.B.C. 6d.

I FORESEE SOME FUN for the authors of this pamphlet. On the very evening that I received it, the post also brought me a card indignantly reproaching me for using eleven times the words 'English' or 'England' instead of 'British' or 'Britain' in an article written about the Battle of Trafalgar. I was assured that I had violated the terms of Union and for a moment felt the qualms of one who has inadvertently committed treason. I have observed in recent years (is it since Mr. Compton Mackenzie espoused the cause of Scottish Nationalism?) an increasing militancy among the 'British', an increasing timidity among the 'English', until, unless we are careful, we soon may be in the psychological condition of those Italians of whom Mrs. Browning wrote that it was

death
To speak the very name of Italy.

As an Englishwoman, born and bred in Yorkshire, with a local Yorkshire name and no nonsense about foreign mixtures, whether Celt or Norman, I am delighted to find Mr. Arthur Bryant and Mr. H. W. Nevinson still audacious enough to speak the name of England, and the B.B.C. bold enough to publish their pamphlet and to broadcast a series of talks on national character, in which they still acknowledge the English to be a nation.

Mr. Nevinson begins his characteristic and delightful essay by observing that 'nearly all men and women like to have their portraits painted'. They do. There are few of us so lacking in egoism that we find no interest in the palmist, the reader of 'character' in handwriting, and the photographer. But when magicians and fortune-tellers disappoint us, and photographers prove all too candid, we find some satisfaction in that mass analysis provided by those who portray our community. Mr. Nevinson observes that 'it is a peculiarity of the English people that they enjoy being criticised and laughed at. Our sense of natural superiority easily bears it. . . . It amuses us and actually increases our confidence'. Hence our delight in the works of Karel Capek, André Maurois, Bernard Shaw and others who try to introduce us to ourselves. Hence the peculiar position which Mr. Nevinson, the author of *Rough Islanders* and of this essay, holds among us. For though we flatter ourselves if we imagine that this great journalist, great adventurer, great champion of freedom, is representative of ordinary Englishmen more than a masterpiece in an art gallery 'represents' the student's copies, there are in his personality those

contradictions which we are pleased to think characteristic of ourselves. The servant of peace who has never, through a long and turbulent life, been able to keep out of a good war; the meticulous artist who has constantly lived a life of action; the protagonist of freedom and rebellion whose most individual trait is a certain *panache* and style, virtues commonly associated with autocrats—he seems peculiarly fitted to paint for us the portrait of a confusingly contradictory people.

For the English, he observes, are more affectionately careful of beasts and birds than any people but the Dutch—yet 'no nation in the world kills so many, not for food or clothing, but for amusement'. We dislike governments, yet are addicted to committees and voluntary political service of every kind. We are eccentric, yet obey a law which declares: 'Thou shalt not dress unlike others of thy class'. We collect fossils and butterflies, antlered heads and stuffed fishes. 'Such pursuits are calculated to occupy the mind, and the more vacant the mind is, the more room is left for the occupation'. We are naïve, and innocently stand up at the end of a Military Tattoo and sing in robust unison the hymn 'Abide with me'; yet we are ironic, especially, Mr. Nevinson observes, among the poorer classes. The middle classes, he thinks, are often 'too deadly serious' to appreciate irony. It was the Tommies who in the last war named the filthiest dug-outs 'Windsor Castle' and sang 'For Gord's sake don't send me! He sums up our national virtues as good nature, honesty, energy and imagination.

It is a graceful list. In a recent broadcast Mr. Baldwin also compiled one no less comprehensive. It would appear that we are, on the whole, pretty well pleased with ourselves. We ascribe virtues even to our vices. We enjoy being told that we are illogical; we call our pride in the face of Africans or Asiatics 'racial purity', and the wisdom of 'pukka sahibs'; we bid our budding politicians: 'When in doubt, play National Character'; we value the optimism of an expectation of muddling through.

There are dangers in this complacency; we exasperate our neighbours far more often than we imagine. But it has one great merit. The original injunction of charity to man was that he should love his neighbour as himself. We have at least obeyed the second half. We love ourselves, and, true enough, this serene assurance of our virtues does preserve us from the shrill self-assertions which betray an underlying conviction of inferiority, and from that bickering intolerance which characterises the oppressed and insecure.

WINIFRED HOLTBY

*Rural Britain Today and Tomorrow—IV**Practical Problems of Country People*

By Professor J. A. SCOTT WATSON

At the end of his descriptive talk Professor Scott Watson engaged in a discussion at the microphone, with a country schoolmaster, on present problems of rural education

I SET off, on the morning of August 28, by a once familiar road, for Forfar—a road along which, as a boy, I travelled a good many times with droves of store bullocks from market. There I spent the best part of the morning with Mr. Conacher, the Director of Education, talking mostly about his country schools. Towards lunch time I walked round the market; but it was a melancholy business to visit the old place again after nearly five and twenty years, and to realise that almost the whole generation of old notables had passed away. Another change, too, struck me with fresh force. This was the marked sobriety of the proceedings. In those days you could make no bargain, however trivial, pay no bill, however small, unless you had a drink on it. You might, indeed, drink lime-juice if you chose, but the fifth or sixth limejuice on a winter's morning became slightly revolting. The customary pledge was a double whisky, at a cost, if I remember right, of fourpence. And so if you had much business to do you needed a head that was stronger than most heads are. There is still a little drinking among the older men, if and when they can afford it; but most of the younger generation seem to be sober from choice.

I made next for Perth, keeping to the old road along the south side of Strathmore, a little way up the slope of the Sidlaws. Here on a clear day, such as I got, you have a wonderful view of the Great Vale (which is the English for Strathmore), of rich tillage land and grass thickly planted with solid stone farm-houses and steadings, and beyond the Grampians rising crest above crest into the blue distance. There on the other slope is Barrie's country with his quaint old town in front; and behind, over the first ridge of the foothills, his Glen Quharity.

Passing through a rich farming country like Strathmore or Lothian, the Vale of York or the Lincoln silts, you find very little visible evidence of agricultural depression. You miss, indeed, some of the old frills and fancy touches. Ricks are not quite so well trimmed; hedge bottoms are not so well weeded; there are a few thistles about in the pastures. But the arable ground is still clean and in good heart, the grass well stocked with fine cattle and the buildings in pretty good order. To get at the truth of the matter you must dig below the surface, when you find, too often, that the cattle belong to the auctioneer, who owes the price of them to his bank; that the seeds and manures that grew the crops are still unpaid for; and so on; in fact, that the whole trading community—bankers, merchants, auctioneers and farmers—are struggling manfully but desperately to hold each other up. Farmers on this good land farm well partly from conviction, partly from habit and pride in the land. One kind of remark illustrates the conviction: 'If it won't pay to farm good land well, then it will pay worse to farm it badly'. And, despite what economists say about the Law of Diminishing Returns, there is a good deal of truth in that sentence; for in the long run it is cheaper to keep land fat and clean than to let it get poor and weedy and then have to face the long task of pulling it round. The second remark that I should like to quote was made by an old man. He said, 'I am going to farm this place, as it should be farmed, till I bust—and then somebody else can have a go'.

A good many people in Scotland are seriously concerned about agricultural wages. You know that Scotland has no Agricultural Wages Boards; I believe, with many of my countrymen, that so far she has been better without them. I believe that, so long as masters and men can come to fair and reasonable terms without the intervention of such bodies, it is better so. Scotland struggled through the early nineteenth century without pauperising her farm workers, when in many parts of England the morale of the farm labourer was ruined by the system of poor relief. I should like to think that Scotland would struggle through this crisis without Wages Boards. I still feel that it is a wrong principle to pay all workers the same wage, whether they are skilful or feckless, industrious or idle. Perhaps you don't agree. But I don't want to see the Scottish farm worker lose any of his fine hardy independence; and I cannot but think that he will do so if the Boards come into being. But the fact is that agricultural wages in Scotland are falling too low; in some counties they are already below the lowest rates that are paid in England. The farmers in fact realise this and would, I believe quite honestly, pay more if they could. But a man who sees ruin creeping very close is apt to drive a pretty hard bargain; and it so happens that this autumn the farmer is in a very strong tactical position for a fight. The extraordinarily early harvest has left farm work very far ahead of the normal time-table and many farmers could run their farms, if they chose, with half their normal staffs for two or three months. The workers, on their part, realise well enough the farmers' difficulties. Too many good

farmers have been breaking, to leave any doubt about the true position. Moreover, the farm worker, more than anybody else that I know, hates and fears idleness. And so the hirings that are due to take place next month may well bring the thing to a crisis. The workers may feel driven to ask for the Wages Boards and I doubt whether such a demand could reasonably be refused.

The only real solution of the problem would be a rise in prices. The prices of some commodities are in fact looking up, but so far the arable man in the East of Scotland has been unlucky. In my own home district, for instance, the main sources of the farmers' income are beef, oats, potatoes. The cattle that were fattened last winter and again those that have been grass fed this summer must have lost, on an average, three or four pounds a head. Oats are selling at 13s. 6d. a quarter and must have cost about 20s. to grow. Potatoes must fetch about 60s. a ton if the grower is to make a living, whereas they are worth about 45s. in today's market. I am sorry to keep harping about agricultural depression. But we must face the thing.

I should like to tell you all about this East of Scotland of mine—to take you with me as I went, by Strathearn to the East Neuk of Fife; and then away west to the Carse of Stirling and then east again through the Lothians and over the Lammermoors to Tweedside. I would like to show you the view from the top of the Lomond Hills, or from Soutra Hill in the Lammermoors. But I have some other things, perhaps more important, to say, though you will, I hope, allow me to make two little boasts about my country—to blow twa wee skirlies on my pipes—before we pass on.

The first is this. It happened that this last hay-time I was in the Carse of Stirling, near Kippen, and saw being cut a crop of Timothy hay which the farmer expected to yield more than four tons to the acre, and I had no difficulty in believing him. He told me besides that his 1932 crop, over some fifty acres that he sold, actually weighed out at better than four-and-a-half tons to the acre. The second fact I should like to record is that on August 30, in this present year of grace, at Broomhall, near Dunfermline, I ate a perfectly ripe and entirely delicious peach, grown out of doors on Lord Elgin's garden wall.

But we must get back to our problems. One that I want to touch on is the question of the preservation of the countryside. I have been having a good many letters from listeners—and by the way, I am trying to answer them as I can find time. Among these letters is one that takes me to task, and pretty severely, for something I said a fortnight ago about those aluminium works at Kinlochleven. I think in fact that I deserved to be scolded for not making myself clear. Anyway I hope I am not what my correspondent takes me for, namely, the sort of person who doesn't care two straws what happens to the countryside so long as men and women make a living in it. My point about Kinlochleven was merely this, that some people want to keep the Highlands empty, for the sake of their own diversion and sport, and resent the coming of industry in any form; and that, in my opinion, such people are selfish and unreasonable.

Again, some people point to the obvious damage done in the countryside by charabanc parties and picnickers from the towns and would like to put obstacles in the way of their coming. I don't agree. I should very much like to see these people behave with more consideration than many of them now do. But I like to feel that more and more town-folk are getting to know the country and to enjoy being in it. I know that some of the things these people do, mostly in ignorance or carelessness, are exasperating enough. One farmer I heard of last month had a very good colt lamed for months by treading on a broken bottle left by a motor picnic party. Another man last year found his field gates open one morning and his stock all mixed up. One result was that this spring a miserable yearling heifer died in trying to give birth to a calf. One could make an endless list of such things—of grass and hedges and woods destroyed by fire, of hay crops trodden into the ground, of sheep chased by dogs, and so on. But don't you think we might try to teach these people a little more than we do, instead of merely threatening? I should like, if I could, to pull down all the notices that say 'Trespassers will be prosecuted'—because this is just a threat and many people resent being threatened. Moreover, many people know nowadays that 'Trespassers will be prosecuted' is rather an empty threat and are annoyed without being frightened. An explanatory notice, I am sure, does far more good than a truculent one. The Forestry Commission has a very good one, explaining the danger of forest fires. 'Mowing grass—please stick to the path' is quite good.



Upland pastures of Lanarkshire

Photograph: Will F. Taylor

Another that I have seen is, 'We don't mind your walking over these fields if you keep your dog under control'.

But it isn't, of course, only casual visitors who are spoiling the country. Villas, holiday camps, factories and so on are being put up in many places with complete disregard to the disfigurement which they cause. Of course local authorities have power, under the Town and Country Planning Act, to stop such things. But the trouble is that in many cases they do not realise that they have a moral duty as well as the legal power. Nobody in fact makes it his business to see that the Act is used. In the matter of hoardings, too, there are still a good many examples of blatant vulgarity which make me—and I hope other people—resolve never to buy the article which they advertise. But I believe we are slowly improving. Only I wish advertisers would realise that the kind of poster which cheers up a railway platform or a blank brick wall in a slum is not necessarily a suitable thing to stick up in an old-fashioned village or on a wayside barn.

One subject I have put down for discussion is the Rural School; and I have brought along a country schoolmaster—Mr. Rayment of Hertingfordbury in Hertfordshire—to join me in it. I have been looking, in passing, at a good many village schools; and perhaps you will just allow me to convey a very short general impression. I left my own village school at the age of eleven; I have seen very little of such schools since; and I have been struck by the contrasts that thirty-three years of progress have brought about. My own school must have been well above the average of its time, for my schoolmaster was a man of rather exceptional personality. And yet, when I compare, the comparison is all in favour of the new ways. Of course the modern schoolmaster has a better chance. His pupils are better fed, and better clad, than many of my class-mates were; his schoolroom is usually a much cheerier and a more comfortable place. He has better books—better written, better printed, better illustrated. The curriculum, too, has been widened and given a new appeal. Also manners seem to be taught as well as other things, and more trouble is taken about games. Altogether I am filled with optimism about the coming generation.

But let Mr. Rayment speak for himself about his parish and his school.

F. RAYMENT: Well, there is nothing very remarkable or exceptional about either. My parish, although it is only some twenty miles from London, is almost purely agricultural. I have, off and on, about seventy pupils, and two women teachers to help me with the school.

J. A. SCOTT WATSON: I suppose that, your place being near London, a good many of your pupils leave the land?

F. R.: Most of them—in fact the great majority—go away,

particularly these days when the number of agricultural workers appears to be decreasing.

J. A. S. W.: Then, of course, you must be careful not to carry the 'rural bias' too far. You mustn't make a curriculum that is in any way specially designed for the child who is going to stay on the land.

F. R.: That is so; but I think I must explain what I understand by 'rural bias'. I don't attempt to make any of my teaching vocational. My idea is simply to make use of the store of educational material that lies all around my school; if a child decides to stay on the land, or is forced to stay, then I hope that he will bring more interest and more understanding to his work. But if he goes away to the town I hope he will also have gained; that he will have been educated adequately and will be left with a love of the country and an interest in its affairs.

For example, one of the local farmers tells me he is going to thresh. I choose one of his ricks as an arithmetical problem. The older boys measure up the field on which the rick of corn was grown. We see the threshing and talk a little about the machinery. We count the sacks of corn and work out the yield per acre. We compare the yield with that of another field, or of the same field a year or two ago. And we discuss the reasons for the differences.

J. A. S. W.: But to make anything of such a comparison you must have information about many things.

F. R.: So we do; for instance, we run our own little weather station—keep records of rainfall, wind, fog and that sort of thing. The children also learn to test soils for lime; every year we make a cropping map of all the fields that the pupils pass on their way to and from school. We have quite a mass of such records, going back a good many years.

J. A. S. W.: Then, of course, apart from outside sources, you have your own school garden?

F. R.: Of course. And the school garden is a thing about which I have very firm opinions. It should not be merely a place to grow vegetables and flowers—well or badly. It should be the main outdoor laboratory. Frankly, I don't go in for a great deal of truly experimental work. One can't attempt, with the facilities available, to make many discoveries. I prefer rather to carry out little demonstrations which are likely to produce striking visible results. Particularly, of course, I try to demonstrate any new fact that some research worker has just discovered.

J. A. S. W.: Do you specialise in any one line? I have felt, about some school gardens, that they attempt too much?

F. R.: I do, in fact—I specialise on fruit. Not because I think this is specially important, but because I happen to be person-

ally interested, and because as you say, it is better to do one thing well, than many things badly. The boys and I do a lot of work with all kinds of fruit—propagating blackcurrants and gooseberries, grafting and budding apples and pears, and so on. We do different systems of pruning and of spraying. And we have very interesting demonstrations of the effects of different root stocks on two or three sorts of apple.

J. A. S. W.: Then about handicraft—do you run that as well?

F. R.: Yes; but my idea is not to bother too much about formal exercises.

J. A. S. W.: I am glad about that. I have sad memories of being taught the dovetail joint when I really wanted to know the best way of hanging a rabbit hutch door. And I once spent six weekly lessons filing a piece of cast iron into a perfect cube.

F. R.: I don't give my pupils that kind of thing. But if we want a garden ladder we make a garden ladder. If we want a little concrete path we make a little concrete path. We take whatever material comes most easily to hand and make it do. I think there is a good deal in this—teaching the boys a kind of general handiness. If we happen not to need anything for the school, then the boys help each other to make things that they themselves want—rabbit hutches out of old sugar boxes, for example.

J. A. S. W.: Do you run a science laboratory indoors?

F. R.: Yes. But we do little formal science. The indoor science work is all intended to bear on the garden, and the farm, and other things that the children meet in their daily lives.

J. A. S. W.: So far we have been talking mostly about the boys—what about the girls?

F. R.: Much of the work is carried out by both boys and girls, but in place of handicraft and gardening the girls get, of course, domestic science and needlework—the former from a visiting teacher. So far as possible the domestic science is made to link up with rural life. The girls are taught to use, in the best way, ordinary garden produce. They make pickles and jams; bottle and can fruit; and generally the work is kept in touch with the domestic economy of the cottage.

J. A. S. W.: When I was down with you, you remember, you showed me a good many maps—I imagine geography is one of your pet subjects.

F. R.: It is. And I feel that local geography is a subject of great possibilities. We have surveyed the parish in various ways. We have done the water supplies; the geology; the past and present industries—like mills, chalk pits, brick works and so on. We discuss why these things are, or why they have ceased to be.

J. A. S. W.: Then that touches on local history too?

F. R.: It does. And once in a while I set a couple of the older boys to dig out the annals of the parish from some of the old records. I can't say that this is a favourite line of study of my own, but some children get quite fascinated by it.

J. A. S. W.: Now two other points. I gathered when I was at Hertingfordbury that most of your pupils finish with school when they are fourteen. But some of course go on. Do all those who are fit for the secondary schools actually reach the secondary schools?

F. R.: No, not at all! Firstly owing to the keenness of competition and the small number of free places available for the wide area covered. Secondly, because so many rural parents are struggling to bring up a growing family on a small wage and do not allow promising boys to compete because they cannot face the problem of keeping them at the secondary school until they are sixteen or more years of age.

J. A. S. W.: Now supposing you get the sort of boy who has real ability; who is obviously worth further training; but who

wants to stay on the land. Is there for him any alternative to the ordinary academic education of the secondary school?

F. R.: Yes. The Hertfordshire County Council has a scheme of Agricultural Maintenance Awards, leading up to Junior Scholarships of the Ministry of Agriculture. Under this scheme boys and girls who wish to follow an agricultural or horticultural career, are granted an award for two years.

During the first year they continue at the village school, working on a specially arranged 'rural syllabus', and in the second year, they are placed on a farm or in a selected garden to get their preliminary practical training. So far, every one of these Maintenance Award children has succeeded in obtaining a Ministry scholarship to the County Farm Institute, and several have been granted extended scholarships.

J. A. S. W.: Now one last question. In Dumfriesshire I was rather struck by a school called Wallace Hall—a secondary school, set in the open country, and run with a definitely scientific and rural bias. Of course no child need go to this particular school. Because there are others of the ordinary classical and mathematical type. But do you think it right to offer, as one alternative, this type of secondary education—based largely on biology and other science—and with farms and gardens as part of the teaching material?

F. R.: Yes!

J. A. S. W.: Well there's a great deal more to be said about these things: I hope the discussion groups will take up the subject where we are obliged to leave it. I am, however, glad to think, as I do think, that in the country schools we are getting nearer to the ideal laid down by Mr. Baldwin the other day—the education of the whole man. We must indeed train our children to remember, and teach them also to think. But we must teach them, too, to see and to hear and to feel, to use the strength of their limbs and the cunning of their hands. When we carry that far enough we shall get rid once for all of the rotten old notion that any boy or girl can have too much schooling.

F. R.: Hear! Hear!



Plan of Duns Public School Garden

A, Poultry runs. Q, Hen house. B, Fruit plot. C, Horticultural plots. D, Agricultural plots. E, Natural borders. F, Strawberry plot. G, Experimental plots. H, Pot experiments. K, Nursery beds. L, Glass frame. M, Rockery. N, Propagation beds. P, Compost heap. R, Weather instruments. S, Grasses. X, Gateway

Films Worth Seeing

Mr. Oliver Baldwin, in his fortnightly film talk on October 25, recommends three pictures that are now being generally released:

FAREWELL TO ARMS (American), based on Ernest Hemingway's novel of this name. 'The stars are Gary Cooper, Helen Hayes and Adolphe Menjou. It is a strong love story set in Italy during the War and will be responsible for more damp handkerchiefs than have been seen for some time. Don't be put off by that because it is good to have your emotions exercised now and again: such things tend to make you more human. The love scenes themselves are extremely naturally played and the photography is much better than the average. Of course there are many details that irritate, but they are of the kind that American producers think nothing of'.

THIS WEEK OF GRACE (British), starring Gracie Fields. 'The story and scenario are very thin and far-fetched and the clothes worn by the members of the aristocracy in the picture for the different events are not true to life. There are three members of the peerage, grandmother, daughter and her son. The grandmother is a duchess, her daughter is a baroness and the baroness' son is a baron with a different name. All very confus-

ing and all very careless. There is a lot of stupid stuff of the old type in this picture—planting a working-class family in a castle and laughing at their incredible stupidities—and there is a half-witted son who is rather pitiful though meant to be funny. The acting is good and I particularly liked the work of Marjorie Brook. Gracie Fields is, as usual, the mainstay of the picture, and comedienne as she is, I should love to see her in a really strong part in a good story'.

SLEEPING CAR (British), which deals with the love affairs of a sleeping-car attendant on the Balkan Express and stars Ivor Novello and Madeleine Carroll. 'This picture falls rather between three stools. We start off with straight comedy, walk into farce, emerge into fantasy and terminate in comic drama. Now for the ordinary listener this is rather confusing and I must own that the parts of the picture I liked best were those directed in the René Clair style—the little bit when the lawyer left Madeleine Carroll after her fit of temper; the arrival of the wagon-lits band; and the repeated farewells of the bridegroom before he was definitely married. As an entertainment on slightly different lines to the average British picture, this is worth seeing'.



Thirlmere, the source of Manchester's water supply, from Dunmail Raise

Photograph: G. P. Abraham

*Vanishing England—II**The Lake District*

By HOWARD MARSHALL

THE only way to see the Lake District properly is to walk through it, but time was against me, and I will confess right away that I travelled through the Lake District in a car, an extremely fast one too, which whirled me early one clear, frosty morning from Carlisle to Penrith. I had at least the advantage of having two friends with me who knew the country exceedingly well. One of them is a writer, a man of wide sympathies, and a romantic; the other is a capable engineer, level-headed and practical: and it seems to me that they represent admirably the two antagonistic trends of opinion on this question of vanishing England. Still, it would seem impossible that there should be any difference of opinion about the need for preserving the Lake District as part of our national heritage. There is surely reason enough in the beauty of those quiet waters lying between the massive hills, in the grandeur and the wildness of the fells. Wildness and beauty, and peace—they are all part of it. I have never in my life seen anything more beautiful, and Heaven knows we need some refuge from the pace and noise of modern civilisation. I warn you that this will be mainly a record of enchantment, and to catch your first glimpse of Ullswater on a perfect autumn day from the valley above Pooley Bridge is magical indeed. For all that, I was uneasy: there is a possibility—a distant one, it is true, but a possibility nevertheless—of building development along one shore of Ullswater, and any building would, it seems to me, ruin it entirely. That is where the practical man first threw the spanner into the works: it was so obvious, I thought, that further building must spoil a lovely lake like Ullswater, and I was amazed when he said, 'You're wrong there—why should building spoil Ullswater, or any of the Lakes, for that matter? You're all alike, you

romantics: see a red roof in the wrong place, and it ruins your whole day. Now if a house or two, or even a cluster of bungalows went up yonder it wouldn't matter to me. I'd look at them—envy the people who lived in such grand surroundings perhaps, and then forget them and turn away and enjoy the rest of the view'.

That is what we are up against, those of us who wish to cling to what is left of unspoilt England. There are people who can appreciate beauty, but cannot see ugliness: it's a fine distinction, but a significant one.

And now let us go on to Haweswater—we went there by a little road which was barely more than a single track, and the first thing we saw at the head of the lake was a collection of flimsy cottages and the swaying cables of a conveyor which stretched its ugly length from hill to hill. The fact is that Haweswater is to be turned into a reservoir by the Manchester Corporation; work is temporarily suspended, but in due course the level of the lake is to be raised some fifty feet. This means that farms and inns and the lovely little Mardale Church at the end of the Lake will be submerged—though the church is to be taken down and re-erected on a higher level. That is no good, though; the charm of Mardale Church is in its present setting, and that is to go. From a wild, unspoilt and lovely little lake Haweswater is to be transformed into a reservoir with the fells coming sheer down into it, and a motor road running along the east side. I am not denying for a moment that the Manchester water supply is of the greatest importance and that Haweswater was probably the only available catchment area. I agree with the practical man that 'It's the thirsty folk in Manchester you have to remember'. I don't agree with him though, when he maintains that the

transformed Haweswater will look all right. It won't: it will look like a reservoir, and we shall have lost something very precious. It is the same with another lake I saw—Thirlmere, the practical man thinks there is nothing wrong with it. Thirlmere has already been turned into a reservoir. It is still a grand lake seen from a distance, from the spur of Sharp Edge, for example, but come close to it, and you will find that it



Mardale Church, which will have to be re-erected on a higher level when its site is submerged by the turning of Haweswater into a reservoir by the Manchester Corporation Photograph: G. P. Abraham

is dead. The margins of the lake have lost their wandering, natural indentations. Thirlmere, or so it seems to me, is lifeless, formalised. I want to make this point, for the practical man would willingly turn all the Lakes over to be made into reservoirs if occasion arose: and this complaisant attitude towards the Lakes, or any natural beauty, for that matter, is dangerous.

Leaving Haweswater we circled Ullswater again. There was an unsightly petrol advertisement stuck up on a farm building as we approached Patterdale, and Patterdale itself, at the head of the lake, showed rather an ominous crop of tea gardens and shops with advertisements outside them. It is not bad yet, by any means; it is marvellously good, indeed, by comparison with other places I have seen in the South: but if we think of the Lakes, let us say, as a relatively sound tooth, places like Patterdale and Bowness are the tiny spots of decay which threaten trouble. We came to Bowness over the Kirkstone Pass. What a grand pass that is—the highest in England—with the road snaking up between gaunt hills, and then dropping down to Windermere, which is perhaps the most popular of all the Lakes. Bowness lies at the end of it—the sort of Eastbourne of Windermere, a lively crowded place in summer with a steamer pier, and cafés and hotels on the lake-side. Bowness is inoffensive, though: it might be infinitely worse. Jammed on the pier, it is true, is a large tin advertisement asking the irrelevant question, 'Where should your factory be?'—but throughout the Lakes there are hardly any roadside hoardings, and petrol pumps are scarce and unobtrusive. I saw some rather blatant garages in the Ambleside district as we took the main road to Keswick, but the rest of the journey was reassuring. Rydal Water, Wordsworth's cottage at Grasmere, the mightily impressive pass of Dunmail Raise, Skiddaw, the narrow streets of Keswick, the shores of Derwentwater, in some ways the loveliest of the Lakes, the Jaws of Borrowdale, and so home.

What were my impressions? I have told you of the unique beauty of the Lakes, and so far it seems to me that it has been remarkably well safeguarded through the zeal of national organisations like the C.P.R.E. and the National Trust, who own several thousand acres in the Lakes—and through the fine work of local individuals and local organisations, and there are many of them. But don't run away with the idea that the fight is over yet. It isn't, by any manner of means. Public opinion must keep at it, and but for public opinion there would now be motor-ing roads over Sty Head and Hardknott and Wrynose: there

would be quarries along the face of Loughrigg, a monster floating advertisement in Bowness Bay, a giant telephone kiosk on Dunmail Raise, a modern bridge at Portinscale and a railway line to Buttermere.

There must be no more motor roads in the Lakes—the one which runs to Keswick is enough. Already the lorries thunder through on this road instead of going over Shap. Obviously the Lake District would make the perfect site for a National Park, but, as it is, there is a nucleus of common land, fells and National Trust properties which virtually make a National Park of it. It is essential, though, that it should be planned. I have brought back with me a remarkable and enormous book which sets forth the Cumbrian Regional Planning Scheme; but this is only advisory; it has still to be adopted. The trouble is that in planning and thus preserving the whole Lake District three County Councils are involved—Cumberland, Lancashire and Westmorland—and the inevitable result is delay and endless committee stages. The Council for the Preservation of Rural England has, I believe, brought the three authorities together into a committee which may consider the Lake District as a whole: in the meanwhile, when I asked how long it would take before the Lakes were planned I was told, 'Oh, probably four or five years'. Well, although the local authorities have powers as soon as a regional planning scheme is under consideration, horrible and irrevocable things can happen in four or five years in a district where one gaudy refreshment kiosk can spoil miles and miles of open countryside. It is a serious problem, it seems to me, the

delay involved by the cumbrous machinery of planning. There is no time to waste, and this applies to the whole of England.

In the meanwhile, the Lakes must be preserved, and if any of you can help in any way, either by joining local organisations or by contributions to national organisations—why, go to it.

THE NATIONAL TRUST



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*Economics in a Changing World—IV**Diagnosis of the Body Economic*

By Commander STEPHEN KING-HALL

LET us begin by telling the body economic to put its tongue out. But though not a fully qualified economic practitioner I am at any rate a conscientious amateur, and as such I feel that we must do a bit more than merely look at a tongue. There are questions of temperature, of blood pressure, of pulse, of respiration, of colour, and some X-ray work, all of which must be taken into consideration. What are the tests? What are the criteria by which one can diagnose the state of health of the body economic as we approach it with our remedies of inflation or deflation in the black bags of policy? How can we tell whether perhaps the kindest and wisest thing would not be to leave the patient alone and trust to the workings of nature? The tests are very numerous and I can only mention a few here because I have several other things I want to discuss. Also I must warn you that it is one thing to describe these tests and another matter to discuss how they should be interpreted.

First there are the exchanges. Those rates at which national currencies exchange with each other. They are rates which vary from minute to minute. The movements of the exchanges reflect in a broad sense the feelings of confidence or mistrust which owners of funds are experiencing in regard to the safety and stability of any particular currency. For example, Monday, October 16, was a very busy day in the London foreign exchange market. At the outset people were selling francs and buying dollars and pounds sterling, with the result that in a short period the French rate rose from 80½ francs to the pound to 82½ francs to the pound.

Similarly the demand for dollars caused movements which meant that whereas at the opening of business you could get \$4.56 for your pound, a little later on you could only get \$4.40 for a pound. The German mark became a little cheaper in terms

of pounds, but here you must remember that the German exchange is very strictly controlled by the authorities in Germany. One may sum up by saying that it looks as if the first thoughts of the exchange operators that day was: 'Hum! things don't look too good as between France and Germany, better get out of marks and francs and into dollars and sterling'. Next day the rather violent movements calmed down and second thoughts evidently convinced people that there was no immediate cause for alarm. The franc went back to 80 to the pound. By the end of the week uncertainty as to whether or not M. Daladier was going to get his drastic proposals for balancing the French budget through the Chamber again caused some people to become nervous about the franc.

Now let us leave the exchanges with the warning that to describe them properly one would need half-a-dozen talks during which one would have to think about the operations of the Exchange Equalisation Fund, the seasonal demands for various currencies, the effects on the exchanges of rumours that Roosevelt will stabilise the dollar or that he will inflate, the effect of rumours that France and the other gold standard countries are having difficulty in staying on gold, or rumours that they have made up their minds never to abandon that golden anchor in a drifting sea of semi-managed currencies. Then we should have to consider the effect on the exchanges—and a very big effect it has been during the post-War years—of the movements of immense sums of short term money. It is also sometimes called 'bad money' and I have heard persons of great respectability use stronger language in connection with these movements of large sums which scurry about the world from one financial centre to another seeking refuge in a 'safe' currency. Scurry is hardly a rapid enough word; for the ownership of these funds is transferred from place to place by cable, and electricity moves at the speed of 186,000 miles a second, or something fantastic like that. It was estimated by the Bank of International Settlements that in 1931 international short term debts amounted to about two thousand million pounds. It was all frightened, although it was not all hopping about from London to Paris and Paris to New York or Paris to London as the political situation made one centre seem safer than another. Today that figure of two thousand million pounds has been reduced, but the amount of

short term money floating about is still very substantial. The existence of this great quantity of 'frightened money' is one of the most disturbing elements in the present-day monetary situation and it is due to the general lack of confidence in the future. Long term international lending has come to a full stop. Lenders are chiefly exercised at the moment in trying to obtain interest payments upon what they have lent in the past without adding to their commitments. Would you lock up a million pounds of capital for a period of say ten years in Ruritania even if the Ruritaniens offered you six per cent. and secured the loan on their custom duties? I must not be more precise, and indeed I have no particular state in mind, for Ruritania stands for most parts of the world at present.

To come back after this aside about short term international debts, to our diagnosis of the reaction of the body economic to the political jolt it has recently received—another sensitive index to what people are thinking is the behaviour of the stock exchanges. Here is what happened on the Monday referred to above.

Wall Street, New York.—Nervous. Heavy selling.

Paris.—Prices were depressed. French Government bonds were sold.

Berlin.—Calm.

Amsterdam.—Inclined to be nervous and weak.

London.—Calm. But prices were marked down a little.

So far as London is concerned it must be remembered that

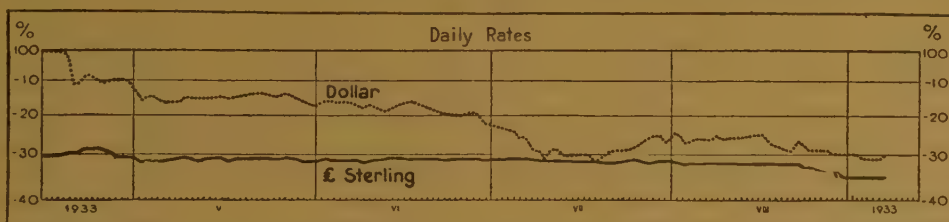


Diagram of exchange rates during the summer of 1933, showing the percentage discount of American and English currencies in relation to their gold parity

From the 'Monthly Bulletin of Statistics' No. 9, Vol. 14, 1933 (League of Nations Publication; Allen and Unwin)

prices of industrial shares have been rising steadily for a number of weeks in response to and partly in anticipation of the evidence of general economic recovery I mentioned a fortnight ago. Now there must be a limit to the extent to which Great Britain can recover unless recovery also takes place over the whole field of international trade, and from this point of view the news of the week is nothing to write home about. I regret to have to report that things do not seem to be going too well in the United States. The Middle West farmer is causing anxiety to the administration, and the administration is causing anxiety to the Middle West farmer. The farmers are disgruntled with the relatively small rise which has taken place in the price of their produce in comparison with the rise in the prices of the manufactured goods they have to buy. A movement has begun for a farmers' strike. The American government is making large purchases of farm produce for distribution to the poor in towns, hoping thereby both to relieve distress and raise the price of farm products. I have also been rather haunted during the past week by the thought of a great massacre—since the recovery campaign began, I understand, the Government has bought and destroyed six million hogs. On the American situation in general one can only reiterate that the success of the experiment depends primarily upon good team-work and good feeling between different classes of the American community and that in this matter the highest common factor is the character, personality and, last but not least, the microphone manner of President Roosevelt. It is an odd example of the changing world that the fate of a nation may in no small degree depend upon whether one man knows how to use a microphone. The expression, 'The pen is mightier than the sword', needs bringing up to date.

Before saying something about the French news I want to lead you gently back to this question of indicators, because an important event has taken place from a statistical point of view. This event was the publication by *The Economist* of particulars of a new Index of Business Activity in this country. Last week reference was made to an index of business activity prepared by the *New York Analyst*, an index which aimed at showing the ups and downs of American business. This new index prepared by *The Economist* aims at doing the same thing for British business activity. It is made up of eighteen factors—'component series' is the technical term. That is to say the statistical movements of certain British economic activities are, after certain adjustments have been made, boiled down into

one index figure. The eighteen factors or indicators include the following: the employment figures; the consumption of coal, electricity, iron and steel and cotton; our imports of raw materials and of certain metals; exports of our manufactured goods; certain banking figures; the number of tons of shipping entering and leaving our ports; building activities; the number of cars registered; the postal receipts. This long list suggests something of the complexity of the economic world whose ups and downs we are discussing each week. The year 1924 has been selected as the basic year for the index and the figure for that year is taken to be 100. In 1929 it rose to 110 and for the whole of 1931 the monthly average worked out at 96.3. The figure for the month of August of the present year is estimated to be 104.1.

Now for a word or two about the French situation. The French crisis has arisen because the government has introduced proposals to meet a budget deficit for 1933-1934 of about seventy-five million pounds. The gap is to be met partly by economies and partly by extra taxation, including special measures to catch tax dodgers, expected to produce ten million pounds. It was suggested last week that in considering the American situation it was absolutely essential not to slip into the habit of thinking of the social structure of the United States of America as being comparable to that of Great Britain. The same remark applies to France. Not many years ago I spent three weeks travelling about France—not Paris, for Paris and the French Press is not always France. Travelling third class, staying with farmers, working as an assistant to a gentleman who was buying old dentures from the peasants, was very instructive, and one of the impressions left on my mind was that the non-payment or evasion of taxation is not ranked in French popular opinion as one of the graver crimes. The attitude of a number of Frenchmen towards income tax and also, for example, the hoarding of money, is not the same as that of his opposite number on this side of the Channel. Many a French peasant has a bit tucked away in a long stocking. If it were possible to abolish income tax tomorrow you would remove from thousands of British people one of their most cherished grumbles and one of their great sources of pride. Our people take a gloomy pride in the punctuality and completeness with which they hand their pound of flesh to the state. Not so the Frenchman. He has other qualities we lack, but that of being a competent tax-payer is not the first of his civic virtues.

Now I want to say a few words about wheat. An Exchange telegram from the Argentine reports that the crop carry-over is two-and-a-half million tons and 'if the coming crop is good

a disaster is feared'. From Australia comes information that the Commonwealth Government has introduced a Bill to prohibit the export of wheat and flour except by permit. Why, when the estimated crop for Australia is expected to produce an export surplus of one hundred and thirty-five million bushels, must the Australian Government only allow one hundred and five million bushels to leave the Dominion? To answer those questions we must go back to August 25, 1933, when, as one of the few positive results of the World Economic Conference, the world's principal wheat selling and wheat buying countries signed an agreement. The purpose of the agreement is to raise the price of wheat. The story of the collapse of the world wheat market is long and dramatic, but in brief the curtain rises on the coincidence of a bumper harvest in the 1928-1929 season and the beginnings of the world crisis in 1929. Ever since that date attempts have been made to negotiate agreements which would both counteract the bounty of nature and mitigate in the international sphere the consequences of national policies of states which have felt the need of protecting their own wheat growers from world competition. In the document signed last August the big oversea exporters agreed to limit their exports to certain definite figures. The wheat importing countries agreed to some rather vague undertakings to the effect that they would do all they could to encourage the consumption of bread and that they would not henceforth 'encourage any extension of the area sown to wheat and not take any governmental measures which would result in increased domestic production'. There are many intricate difficulties in the interpretation of the Wheat Agreement, not the least being the fact that it was not practical politics to arrange for the International Clerk of the Weather to be represented by a delegate at the various meetings. The weather has been much too fine and the Agricultural Institute at Rome has estimated that 'in the whole of the world the stocks of wheat that will be carried over to the new season 1933-1934 will be the largest ever recorded'.

In conclusion here is a kind of economic crossword puzzle. The Canadian official trade returns reveal that during the first six months of 1933 the Canadian exports of unmanufactured nickel were four times as large as those for the corresponding period of 1932. A notable part of this increase has been exported to the continent of Europe. Dinner table subject for conversation: 'How should one account for this remarkable increase in the consumption of a metal which is an important element in the manufacture of a number of articles, some useful in the arts of peace, but others exclusively reserved for use in war?'

Australia's Century of Progress

(Continued from page 659)

stitutional Convention to be held in Hobart early next year. On this occasion the long-overdue review of the Constitution will be made. It is not surprising to find such a review necessary in a Federation, for experience brings out many difficulties in the working of a federal constitution. It is more than 30 years since His Majesty the King, when Duke of York, opened the first Federal Parliament. First the Great War and then the great depression imposed a severe strain on the Federation. It is appropriate now to take stock in common council of the working of the Constitution.

We have seen that Australian development was fostered by extensive governmental activity. This necessitated public loans both at home and abroad. Government borrowing became the traditional method of developing new areas and settling immigrants. But with seven Governments in the field for loans, there was little co-ordinated effort. To secure co-ordination and to limit borrowing as far as possible to sound ventures, the Australian Loan Council was finally established with statutory powers in 1928. Those of you who follow the cables from Australia will recall frequent references to this important body in the past three years. An amendment of the Constitution was required before the Council could be established with sufficient powers. The Council consists of one representative of each Government, and it determines the amount of all loans to be raised and the conditions under which they shall be raised. This was very important in the recent depression when borrowing to finance deficits was necessary. The Council was able to limit the deficits and to secure a co-ordinated effort in financial policy. It was the effective instrument through which the Premiers' Plan was promulgated and 'policed'. It may impose a check upon a Government that seeks to embark upon a policy out of harmony with the policy of other Governments. In this respect it is more powerful than a single Parliament, and is thus an interesting, and I think unique, example of the exercise of supreme authority in a Democracy by a body outside Parliament itself. Since all loan expenditure must be sanctioned by the Council, it is possible to check unhealthy expenditure unless all governments, or a majority of them, pursue an unsound policy. The proper control of borrowing in Australia, as elsewhere, will in the future be a matter of great importance. The

Australian Loan Council should prove a valuable means of providing this control and its development will be watched with great interest, both in Australia and abroad.

I have indicated that Australia has problems of her own, which she is attacking with resourcefulness and courage. Nowhere is this seen more clearly than in the work of her scientists. Each State Government provides an important service in agricultural research and advice to farmers. Agricultural Colleges and Experimental Farms are maintained to train research workers and to experiment with methods of production. The Universities give special attention to agricultural studies and to industrial research, notably in South Australia, where the Waite Institute is rendering great service to agricultural and pastoral development. But the most important scientific organisation is the Commonwealth Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, with its large army of research workers and its successful efforts to co-ordinate the work of all scientific bodies. In the wheat industry the methods of dry farming are carried further than probably in any other country. Investigations into pasture management are increasing the efficiency of the pastoral and dairying industries. Then there are pests to be eradicated, like the blowfly and the buffalo fly. Research into methods of destroying these pests is in progress. If it succeeds, the economic gain will be enormous. The successful attack on prickly pear is a striking example of the value of scientific work. The introduction of a tunnelling caterpillar (*Cacto-blastis cactorum*) has resulted in the destruction of the pear over millions of acres. This work will finally reclaim an area as large as England.

This scientific work forms part of the attack of Australia upon her environment. The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research is financed by the Commonwealth Government. It is not an activity that causes political crises, but it is very important. So when you read of the success of Australia in sport, of the political controversies, of fires and famines—of all things that the journalist calls news—you must try to think of the thousands of silent workers scattered over the vast areas of Australia. They carry on the job of utilising the Australian environment, and make their contribution to the establishment of a new British nation far away from its original home.

Points from Letters

Owing to the pressure upon its space, THE LISTENER is able to publish only a selection from the correspondence which it receives. Correspondents are asked to write briefly and to the point, and are reminded that name and address must always be given, even where their publication is not desired. THE LISTENER, of course, undertakes no responsibility for the views expressed in these columns

Vanishing England

Mr. Howard Marshall's tour of the South Coast cannot have been a joy ride for him, nor will his further adventures at other seaside resorts. Unfortunately all England is going the same way, and though some of us have been deploring the fact for years, the pace has only got faster. For instance it is four years since, with Mr. Harry Peach's help, I edited *The Face of the Land*, but it would be hard to put one's finger on any real improvement, while one could find a hundred places where things are very much worse. That was why I was glad to see in your editorial that you went to the root of the evil—namely education, or the lack of it, as regards this side of life. Legislation has proved itself not useless but inadequate, and for two reasons. Firstly, it cannot anticipate new developments unthought of at the time it is enacted. Secondly, if local authorities are only half-hearted about it, the law is not applied. Besides, most of the town-planning acts are permissive rather than compulsory. All the time our schools turn out Philistines and are rather proud of it, public schools quite as much as elementary. Even where a vague respect for Art is inculcated, there is seldom any real sense of what design means. Otherwise we should not have fallen victims to the imitation half-timbered villa which is the typical small house of the 'thirties. Because the rich fell in love with the antique, and the middle classes built themselves modern replicas, this style has been watered down to cover every deficiency in architecture. Exactly the same lack of feeling for design accounts for our authorities' acquiescence in every kind of anti-social development. I regard this year's broadcast talks and the general interest taken by the B.B.C. in design as by far the most encouraging thing that has happened since the C.P.R.E. was formed.

London, S.W.1

NOEL CARRINGTON

Homes of Tomorrow

The writer of your article on 'Homes of Tomorrow' in THE LISTENER of October 11 appears to have been so concerned at the idea of pure functionalism invading the province of domestic architecture that he has lumped together as 'modernists' all those who consider that the primary essential of a building is its fitness for purpose, and, by attributing to them tenets which are those of extreme functionalists, has overstated his case and has allowed the real defendant—traditionalism—to escape with a farthing damages. Make no mistake. It is not the modern architects who stand in the dock, but those who have brought British architecture to its present pass. It is they who have cared too much for tradition, and too little for the 'internal laws' of architecture; who have bowed down before the columns and cupolas of the past and have delighted to deck with Tudor timbers the scarce completed homes of tomorrow; who have shown their regard for the traditional Georgian house by magnifying it a thousandfold to make it a hotel; and who have imitated purely for the sake of picturesqueness that which was originally built primarily for the sake of utility!

There are, on the other hand, many architects falling within the 'modernist' category of the article who, while laying the chief emphasis on rendering a building fit for its purpose, have a nice regard for the proportions of a building, for the spacing of windows, and for the juxtaposition of masses. They could maintain that thereby they are obeying the 'internal laws' of architecture, and that at the same time they are able to change their buildings to accord with changed habits and ideals. Such men, like the architects of the Gothic epoch, will not shrink from using new methods of construction or new materials. 'Human nature', which in the article appears to be used in the sense of human habits and ideals, has in that sense changed, is changing, and will continue to change; but we are not 'forced' for that reason 'to ask ourselves what sort of people could live' in the fanciful future which Mr. Wilenski has painted' before we venture to have a private house built of concrete and steel, any more than we are forced to ask ourselves what sort of people lived in mud huts before we venture to build a half-timbered Neo-Tudorian monstrosity.

London, N.W. 8

CHARLES DE PEYER

Design in Postage Stamps

In THE LISTENER, October 18, there is a letter relating to Mr. Harry Carter's article on 'Design in Postage Stamps'. Mr. Carter seems to have the knowledge that 'the best artists procurable were employed' to design stamps: Mr. Morton Shand says they were not, and quotes Eric Gill as one of the artists who might have been asked to design a stamp. I do not know how much Mr. Carter knows of the activities of the Postmaster-General, but that he knows more than Mr. Shand is certain. I

think perhaps it is for the Postmaster-General to publish the full list of artists he has invited to design stamps in the past, but I should like to say that Eric Gill was asked to compete with a number of artists, well known and unknown—I was one of the unknown—in designing stamps for the Postal Congress Union, 1929, an issue that lasted three months. Why the Postmaster-General did not choose Eric Gill's design is for him to say. The names of the successful designers were, and are now, in stamp collectors' catalogues for all those interested in the designers of stamps to see.

It would, no doubt, be good to see the public interested in any great national competition of this sort; and for them to know the names of the artists and follow the results, but this seems an affair to settle with the Postmaster-General. The greatest evil in all designs, I believe, comes from the development of the machinery for reproducing the design. This has gone along the lines that perfection is arrived at by reduction, and those artists who are no longer craftsmen have embraced the opportunity of making large drawings and handing them over to the machine without further bother; and now it is no longer expected of the artist that he should be a craftsman also. In the competition of 1929 we were told quite definitely that only a drawing was needed, as the rest of the process was to be entirely in the hands of the engravers. I was allowed to see proofs of my designs, but nothing further. The drawings, it is true, were only to be two-and-a-half times actual size, whereas I have seen drawings many times larger that were intended for reduction to the ordinary stamp size. There seem to be so many points to be considered—points of policy as well as production—in designing a stamp that only by the closest collaboration of the parties concerned can a fit stamp be designed. By a fit stamp I mean one that will serve both from the Post Office requirements and the artist's sense of what is good. I see no reason why the artist should not engrave his own stamp; why he should not incorporate machine work into his own design; or why the inclusion of the King's head should spoil a design. The only point I should make is that it takes up most of the space. I see no reason why the words 'Postage Revenue' or any of the other information (if it is necessary) should in any way hinder the artist from producing a simple and noble design. Obviously too much matter in a stamp will prevent simplicity, but is there too much matter when we think of the 'meaningless ornament' that has gone to overcrowding our stamp designs? Mr. Carter complains that 'meaningless ornament' has not been explained. Ornament can be either a texture obtained by dots, dashes, criss-crosses or interlacing shapes that have no direct resemblance to natural forms, or by symbols based directly on a natural form that has some bearing to the design (historical or pictorial). Heraldry is a good example of the relationship between *motif* and story.

If the dolphins Mr. Carter complains of have nothing to add to the story of the stamp they are meaningless. If there is an empty space (though no good design will ever have an empty space), then it can be filled with a texture of some sort or dolphins or elephants. It is better to use a texture, as the dolphins, etc., give rise to speculation, whereas a texture leaves us disinterested in an associative sense. Perhaps the dolphins do mean something—then I agree that they should not look like a 'heap of vegetables'. To produce a good stamp the artist must be prepared to design for a stamp with all its limitations, and the Post Office must be prepared to listen to the opinions of the artist. Training on both sides is necessary.

Hampstead

JOHN FARLEIGH

Burke, Chatham and the Empire

The following passage is quoted from the report published in THE LISTENER of October 4, as coming from the Oxford Chair of Colonial History:

Neither Burke nor Chatham, for all their good sense and good will, understood that, sooner or later, the Empire was bound to break up unless its political and economic structure could be so adjusted as to make its citizens in the colonies the equals of its citizens in Britain.

The reference to Burke is perfectly incorrect, and the one to Chatham has to be slightly qualified. When the Rockingham ministry took office in 1765, the great issue of the day was the repeal of the Stamp Act and a declaration of rights in its place. Chatham held that Parliament was supreme in every circumstance, but that colonial taxation was no part of its governing and legislative powers. This was due to his belief in Locke's idea of property—man's property cannot be taken away without his consent. Thus Chatham's idea of Empire was one in which the rule of law—taxation with consent and the absence of imposition from above—should prevail.

Burke had profounder notions of Empire. His view on the American situation was that taxation was legal, but to impose it was highly impolitic. It was the duty of the Government not to render its people miserable but happy. 'The people must in effect possess the power of granting their own money, or no shadow of liberty can subsist': those are his own words. He pointed out acutely that the restoration of American liberty would mean the retention of English liberty, already threatened by the growth of the power of the Crown under George III.

This treatment of the American problem made Burke indirectly express his own conception of Empire and the Imperial Parliament. The first was defined as an aggregate of many States under one common head. Once the parts are looked upon as States, it is clear that the whole assumes a structure of a federal nature. The concord of the Empire was to be preserved by a unity of spirit, *i.e.*, a common British heritage, in a diversity of operations. The Imperial Parliament was to have two functions—to act as the local legislature of the isle and to superintend in its imperial character the several inferior legislatures of the parts. Time has shown that Burke was right in his idea of Empire.

It might be added that Burke lost the Empire in the West by standing on the side of freedom. However, the blame lies on the administrators of the day for not taking his advice. On the other hand he made a new Empire in the East by laying the foundations once and for all of a moral, just, and philanthropic public opinion in England with reference to India, through his laborious efforts in the years 1786 to 1794. Thus Burke possessed sound principles of Empire building of which Professor Coupland seems not to be aware.

Cambridge

F. W. OBEYESÉKERE

Ney and Napoleon

I hasten to say that I think my friend Mr. Maurice Healy is right; and that my phrase about Ney was a confusion of conflicting memories. Ney probably was accused of treason to both sides; since he urged the abdication of Napoleon and accepted the restoration of the Bourbons; but the main fact which made his name known to the English was not the fact that he left Napoleon, but the fact that he rejoined him. It was for this, as of course I knew quite well, that he was actually executed as a traitor. But it was because of this tale about treason, which some fanatical Bonapartists might have called double treason, that his name is better known to the English than that of Massena or Lefebvre. What I ought to have said, had I not spoken in the confusion of haste, was 'especially those conspicuous by changing sides—like Ney and Bernadotte'. But most certainly I was wrong in suggesting that Ney deserted Napoleon in the manner of Bernadotte. I apologise to the ghost of that great soldier.

Beaconsfield

G. K. CHESTERTON

The Group Movement

Thank you for publishing the article by the Dean of University College, Oxford, on the Group Movement. In my limited first-hand acquaintance with the Groups I bumped into the difficulties he mentioned. For instance, I listened to a public confession of sins from a Group team. While impressed with their sincerity, I could not see how this method could be universally applied without injury to many individuals. One is handing over one's life to public gossip. Confession to a trusted advisor is in a different category. Further, I failed to discover on enquiry any effective control to deal with hypocrites, from whom no movement is exempt.

But when all adverse criticism (and that well-founded) has been made, there is one overmastering question which the Dean did not consider. Why has this movement come into being and spread so rapidly? What bearing has it on the way the Churches function? We have been told frequently that the modern man is not worrying about his sins. Yet here is a movement which has personal sins as its first concern, and its adherents multiply daily! It looks as if the problem of sin is still urgent. Why have not the Churches met the need? Here we touch the most serious aspect of the whole issue. To those who would ignore this challenge of the Group Movement I commend a re-reading of that best-seller, Dick Sheppard's *Impatience of a Parson*. His impatience is considerably shared by a multitude. If youth is running after a quack remedy in the Group Movement, the Churches cannot evade their responsibility. There must be something grievously wrong with their witness.

Ancient Chapel of Toxteth,
Liverpool

F. HEMING VAUGHAN

Cinder Paths and Tarred Roads

Mr. Alan Verner Smith misrepresents what I wrote about the absence of complete black in stationary Nature. He says: 'What really troubles Mr. Palmer is not the blackness of the cinder path, but the discord it strikes with Nature, who has not yet assimilated it and harmonised it with herself'. Does he mean that presently Nature will free herself of the discord by getting

rid of all her greens and going into mourning; by the aid, perhaps, of a punishing fire out of Heaven—which will, no doubt, burn everything into ebon harmony? Mr. Smith adds: 'Verdure spreads over the cinder path where it crosses the fields, and leaves carpet it in the wood'. But if verdure spreads over a path, it is no longer a path; and it is news to me that leaves fall to the ground all the year round. He also says: 'The hard surface of the tarred road reflects the changing colour of the sky'. If this be true it is surely a discord, while a road which has affinities with a mirror is liable to interfere with the eyesight of the motorist, and is therefore a danger.

St. Albans

HERBERT PALMER

Snakes and their Young

I have been following closely the correspondence in your paper dealing with the supposed swallowing of young by the mother adder. I see that in *THE LISTENER* of October 18 Mr. Grant Watson refers Dr. Morrison, of Campbelltown, to 'a well-known London surgeon' for first-hand evidence that the mother adder will swallow her young in their time of danger. I may say that I have been in communication with this gentleman, whose candid statement of facts has unfortunately been misinterpreted by Mr. Watson, and both this surgeon and myself are agreed that he found and dissected two pregnant adders.

Huddersfield

ELLEN GALLWEY

Assistant Curator, Tolson Memorial Museum

I agree with the evidence submitted by Mr. Grant Watson as to the mother adder swallowing its young. Many years ago while walking quietly near a hedge at South Down Farm, Pembroke, I heard a hissing sound and saw a few yards in front of me an adder, between its hisses swallowing its young. It then glided away through the undergrowth. Mr. Norman Morrison may be interested enough to read this even if he is unable to swallow this statement.

Swansea

W. NEVILLE PUGH

'Half-Applied Science'

Your leader on 'Half-Applied Science', in *THE LISTENER* of October 18, overlooks several important considerations which account for the attitude of 'every Tom, Dick and Harry' towards 'the experts in the pseudo-sciences' of economics and politics. The reasons why ordinary folk distrust these experts are because (1) the experts are not agreed among themselves as to the value of their plans and policies; (2) their plans and policies are not based upon experimental facts but rather upon statistics which are often misleading; and (3) the application of their plans and policies may profoundly affect not only the lives and personal habits of 'Tom, Dick, and Harry' but also the social customs and institutions to which they have become attached. It is impossible to experiment with human beings as the scientist does with animals, plants and matter, and therefore the so-called social sciences are more arts than sciences and call for wisdom and persuasion rather than experiment and tabulation.

Strone

A. LANG

'Draft of XXX Cantos'

In your issue of October 18, in a review of *Draft of XXX Cantos*, by Ezra Pound, occurs the extraordinary and startling statement 'It takes almost as much poetic genius to understand a poem as it does to write it! If this is so, then Mr. Hugh Sykes Davies' recent series of articles might as well never have been written; more, the majority of us may give up reading modern poetry. (I take it that it is to modern poetry that the words refer, for I, personally, have been able to understand quite a lot of the poetry of the past and I should be the last person to claim any measure of poetic genius.) About Mr. Pound's poems your reviewer remarks 'It is not for us to doubt that they are emotions worthy to be made poetry of'. 'Not for us', indeed! Then the critical times are out of joint, for I have always understood it to be one of the functions of a good critic of poetry to pass judgment on the quality and value of the emotions expressed. How else can he interpret creative experience?

Dailly

CHARLES M. GIBSON

The National Balance of Trade

Many, no doubt, keenly appreciate Commander Stephen King-Hall's exposition (*THE LISTENER*, October 11) of the matter of 'the national balance of trade' of which he naively says we have heard people talk. We have indeed. We have endured all the Protectionist measures to have our trade balanced. I still remember with astonishment that leading politicians advocated this, when in our elementary economic studies we were taught that the 'adverse' balance is always balanced by the 'invisible exports' of which the overseas-carrying we do for other nations is probably chief. Any nation that invests capital abroad is bound to have an 'adverse' balance. It is a sign of opulence, not poverty.

Scunthorpe

JOHN H. BROCKLESBY

Books and Authors

Truth About Ourselves

A Wandering Minstrel. By Sir Henry Lytton. Jarrolds. 10s. 6d.

Freeman of Stamboul. By Professor Freeman. Gollancz. 18s.

Trekking On. By Deneys Reitz. Faber. 15s.

Reviewed by G. K. CHESTERTON

I HAVE in front of me three books which will seem at first sight to have absolutely nothing to do with each other, beyond the fact that they all happen to be books of memoirs. But I should like to use them as representing three aspects of a thing very little understood in England—and that is England. It is almost as little understood as France. Mostly we have to choose between three things. First, mere boasting of what is English, which is then always called British and always makes me suspect that it is really American; second, a mere sceptical reaction among young people against all that is English and a great deal that is merely human, scepticism that denounces British rule as unjust and then denies that there is any justice to judge it by—the moderns say we can be certain of nothing, but they are quite certain that their fathers were fools; third, there is the trick of boasting of not boasting, of calling oneself rough and tough in the manner of Major Bagstock—the man who brags of himself by professing that he jeers at himself. And that is perhaps the very worst of the three.

Now to note what is really distinctive of England, let us take this first—that England is, or was, an extremely jolly place to live in, at least for the tolerably prosperous classes. It was one bad result of their very jollity and careless prosperity that they took too little trouble to create a peasantry that had any stable independence, or thrift among the poor. But as an atmosphere, until fairly recently, it was very comfortable. It is said that young people were humbugged in Victorian times; I can only say that young people are being very thoroughly humbugged now on the subject of the Victorian times. Nothing can be more absurd than to say that the Victorians were merely prim, prosaic and respectable; on the contrary, they were the only people, before or since, who lived in a happy topsy-turvydom. It may be hundreds of years before we again produce the mood that produced Lewis Carroll and Lear's *Nonsense Rhymes*; for ages and for ages the Walrus and the Carpenter may never meet again.

Now if I wanted to describe that late Victorian England in which I was a child, I should say that I grew up with the Gilbert and Sullivan operas—they were of much more national importance than the Gladstone and Disraeli debates. And in Sir Henry Lytton's book of reminiscences, *A Wandering Minstrel*, we have a remarkably warming and convincing account of that world—like so much English conversation, all the more sincere for being in a sense superficial. It contains some very good stories, including one about the impromptu wit of Gilbert, which I had never heard before: Gilbert asked an actor to sit down pensively—the actor sat down and broke the chair. (This often happens to me when I sit down in a pensive manner.) Gilbert said: 'I said sit down pensively, not expensively'.

But this very case of Gilbert's wit gives a hint of the danger. This Victorian jollity was too comfortable, and it sometimes stifled the things that were sent by God to make it uncomfortable. Victorianism did not stone the prophets, it smothered them, and I agree with the critic who said that Sir Henry Lytton was wrong in saying that Gilbert's satire was always good-natured. It was not good-natured—it was the victims who were good-natured. Gilbert was not a comfortable person. When somebody mistook him for a waiter and said: 'Call me a four-wheeler', and he answered: 'You are a four-wheeler; you couldn't expect me to call you handsome', we are amused—but we are not the man he said it to. His humour is often harsh and sometimes ungracious, as in his jokes about spinsters. But Sir Henry Lytton embodies all that English tradition in simply refusing to accept the joke as a challenge. For instance, that period was so patriotic that it ignored the fact that Gilbert was making fun of its patriotism. He has a song describing an English ship fleeing in terror from a French ship, with hypocritical excuses that fighting a Frenchman is like hitting a woman. Now it is a solemn fact that I have seen English protests against this rather savage satire on the English, because it might offend the

French. Apparently you cannot offend the English. But Gilbert was as offensive as possible.

That is the first aspect, which I will call 'fun inside England'. Inside England we were so resolved to have fun that we would not have satire; we insisted that satire was only fun. Sir Henry Lytton's favourite part, that of Jack Point, the Jester, is full of bitterness, and bears its testimony to that fact. Gilbert describes the Victorian English exactly—'they're exceedingly kind, they don't blame you, so long as you're funny'.

I have called that side of the national character 'fun inside England'. Now we all know that there is another side of the national character which may be called 'fun outside England', incorrectly described as an Empire. Many of the real original adventures were for fun; some, I admit, were for money; hardly any, I think, were for Empire. The typical English story is the boy's adventure story, especially that of the boys who never grow up. There are some astonishing autobiographies of that sort, like that of Trelawney, the friend of Shelley. The great tradition is continued in *Freeman of Stamboul*, by Professor Freeman. He opened his chapter of 'fun outside England' by being born outside England—he was born in Constantinople—and his knowledge of the East led to many things, such as a very interesting contact with Gordon, then immersed in his mystical archæology about Palestine. But it is typical of this sort of wanderer that he seldom starts with a religion, as Gordon did. He is ready for anything. Professor Freeman very nearly became a Mormon. He does at least give the real arguments for Mormonism, that is, the arguments for polygamy. It will not startle you if I say that I am not a Mormon or a polygamist. It is characteristic of America and the modern world generally that they have forbidden the only part of Mormonism for which any reasonable man could advance any arguments at all. Fortunately, Professor Freeman discovered that the old tribal patriarchal morality has two sides. Somebody told him of the hideous tale of treachery and cruelty, the Mountain Meadow massacre—possibly the only historical event worse than the massacre of Glencoe—so Professor Freeman decided not to be a Mormon. One feels vaguely that he might have moved on somewhere else and become a Muhammadan. In other words, over all this second department of 'fun outside England' there is a curious detachment and I rather suspect Mormonism is not so good as he thought it was at the beginning, nor so bad as he thought it at the end. So I fancy Hinduism is not so good as the Theosophists thought it, nor as bad as the author of *Mother India* thought it. But the English abroad do not go in for studying systems of thought. Mr. Kipling has expressed the whole idea of 'fun outside England' truly at least once in a phrase: 'For to admire and for to see, for to behold this world so wide'. You will observe that he doesn't say 'to think'.

And now I come to the best book of the three in the literary sense, and for the third aspect in which Englishmen should consider England. The third book is not by an Englishman—that is why it is the most important of the three; that is why it is most necessary for Englishmen to consider it. Even on these terms, it is a favourable specimen—I mean a specimen specially favourable to us. Otherwise it would never have been so handsomely published and received in England, or indeed published in England at all. Its author is the brilliant author of *Commando*, Mr. Deneys Reitz, and it is called *Trekking On*. Perhaps the best criticism of its critics is to say that none of them in this country sees anything sinister in the title. Its author is a Boer, or South African Dutchman, uprooted from the Boer Republic which we destroyed, and he began by being an irreconcilable rebel against us, but ended by being on our side, though very largely by a profound instinct that he meant to be on the opposite side to Germany. But it will be well for us to remember that he is detached. He is still 'trekking on', but there is no comfortable Victorian certainty about where he is trekking to. Today there is only one thing of which we are certain, and that is that we are uncertain, about all the merely

political enclosures of particular peoples within particular empires. With any patriotism that I possess I do implore Englishmen not to read this book as they have read so many books, looking for compliments to England and forgetting everything else. This is a book by a total stranger, who thought, as many Irishmen did, after bitter division of the heart, that Prussian Imperialism was worse than British Imperialism. In that, I think, he was a good European, but he was not an Englishman. Our chances with him and with all such men as he will not depend on our being good Englishmen; it will depend on our being good Europeans.

In short, the moral of this wandering Dutchman from Africa is strangely like the one of the wandering minstrel from the Savoy operas. We must purge ourselves of this happy habit of

treating all comments as compliments; of saying that all our old domestic satire must have been good-natured satire; that all our foreign allies must have been completely satisfied allies. It will not do. We were all in a very jolly old world once, those of us who were Englishmen of the comfortable classes. It seemed like a world in which everyone was satisfied; in which the Walrus and the Carpenter were always walking hand in hand. The fact that we were under-paying the Carpenter and probably exterminating the Walrus didn't trouble us. We never remembered that the Walrus had tusks, or the Carpenter tools. We never allowed anything to have a sharp edge. It was a very jolly world I grew up in, and I love it; there was nothing wrong with it, except that it does not exist.

The Queen and Mr. Gladstone

The Queen and Mr. Gladstone. By Philip Guedalla.

Vol. I 1845—1879. Hodder and Stoughton. 25s.

THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY REACTION has begun, and soon it will come with a rush. All that our ancestors detested in the Holy Alliance has resurged in modern dictatorships. Crystal Palace idealism has reappeared in still more expensive structures. Against a Socialist Conservatism, radical farmers and Trades Unionists will hoist the banner of *laissez-faire* and private rights. Ten million holders of Savings Certificates are rediscovering the banished charms of thrift. The 'intelligent man' is demanding British guides to the world chaos. And here is Mr. Guedalla in the van, and pitching it high; to diffuse wider knowledge of 'the two leading figures of the nineteenth century', he is publishing fifteen hundred documents exchanged between the Queen and 'the greatest of her Prime Ministers'.

There always must be a fascination in a correspondence between the Sovereign and the head of the executive which binds the Sovereign to the nation. What Charles II scribbled at Council meetings to Clarendon, what Queen Anne with faltering grammar and aching heart poured forth to Marlborough, what George III's excitable obstinacy growled to Pitt, such writings teach us something of the stress, the pain, and the pettiness, which accompany the human conduct of the world's largest decisions. The present volume, though in form and conception a model, cannot be expected to add much that is positive to our knowledge; for the cream has been skimmed long ago, and what is left is thin and a little sour. There is a good deal of mere interchange of the condolences which the Queen loved, and which Gladstone did with rugged grandeur; a good deal, too, of her panics and alarms regarding too slow railways and too high clergy, of the excellence of Canon Duckworth and the depravity of the English climate. Nor, again, was either Victoria or 'the People's William' a pleasing letter-writer. Her emphasis is lost in underlining every fifth word, while she reserved for her ministers her complaint of the tolerably common affliction of widowhood; his force, when he took his pen, suffered from length and obscurity, and marched in a fourth dimension of thought, which was neither religion, nor statesmanship, nor tactics, but an atmosphere, recorded in quick pressures on a human barometer. Moreover, a correspondence, to entrance the reader, must have a real amount of mutual sympathy; here one feels that it is one-way traffic, separated by a stupendous Albert Memorial.

Mr. Guedalla's introduction tries to date this lack of sympathy, on the hypothesis that there were three successive Victorias; 'little Vic', of Kensington Palace, the Queen Peelite and Albertian, and finally, a Disraelian warlike Empress. There is substance in the argument, and justice in the criticism of modern psychic biographies which play the high light on one *motif* in a long life. But I think it over-rationalises the Queen, and (we shall see in the next volume) over-exalts Gladstone. What war meant to her nostrils she had already shown in the Crimea; Disraeli, far from stimulating, suffered unspeakably from her jingoism in 1876-7. And this very correspondence reveals that her breach with Gladstone was deep already, before Disraeli came into office. With her private secretary he speculated as to the 'fanciful ideas of a woman about her own health encouraged by a feeble-minded doctor'; and in spite of his chivalrous devotion to the Crown, he was incapable of dealing with its wearer. On every major question he was right, in his protest against the Queen's scandalous seclusion at Osborne or Balmoral when public business demanded her presence in London, or in his wish to give the Prince of Wales a responsible share in her duties. But with what *gaucherie* he went about it!

I have heard it argued, not perhaps without an eye to recent controversy, that Queen Victoria left the power of the Crown much greater than she found it—her power as a part of the constitution, and not merely her influence as a social and Imperial figurehead. It needs little thought to dispel this illusion. No Bed-Chamber question could have unseated Gladstone as it unseated Peel, and Radicalism progressed without let or hindrance from the Queen. History must unhappily record her violent prejudices, her carping at, even disloyalty to, her minis-

ters, but her influence increased from legitimate causes, not from any sleight of hand by Disraeli. It came from causes to which Gladstone was blind, and Royalty was not; causes which the publication of Chamberlain's papers has lighted up again. Khartoum, South Africa, Ireland, the total neglect of social legislation—such was the last and weakest phase of Gladstonianism, to which the Queen was hostile. She grew not as a legend stored up by old age, but because, in part consciously, she was on the side of the growing forces of the Crown as centre of a larger loyalty and of a renewed society. While to Gladstone, so it seems to me, there remained after 1885 little but his exuberant vitality and his love of power. Surely an illuminating sentence in these documents is this: 'he humbly attaches to the performance of duty the greatest efficiency in creating not only a capacity, but a taste for such performance'.

The work of time, bringing with it new forces, divided Queen and minister, but they were sundered already by temperament, by pettiness on her side and lack of imagination on his, and even by religious outlook; on which Mr. Guedalla might surely have said more, for the Tractarian in Gladstone was the most permanent fibre of his being. But in the dust of the often small bickerings with which these letters deal, we shall be wrong, and do the Victorian age wrong, if we forget that Queen and minister were united during fifty years in one task, however differently they viewed it, to make a better and a stronger England.

KEITH FEILING

Report on Crossword No. 188

The original 'Gradatim' puzzle was adjudged easy by many competitors; the second has proved very difficult indeed, and the title of the book prize, *How the Mind Works*, may have seemed

A	P	O	S	T	R	O	P	H	E	B	S
F	I	L	P	I	O	Q	U	E	C	A	B
P	L	A	H	C	S	E	R	M	O	N	I
R	A	N	I	H	Y	S	C	E	E	N	R
O	B	E	N	O	F	C	O	R	N	E	R
C	O	P	X	U	I	R	C	D	R	O	
E	S	C	A	N	D	N	I	O	B	E	
S	T	R	O	N	G	B	E	E	R	U	M
S	O	O	D	J	E	W	I	T	C	H	G
I	N	N	A	E	R	D	L	E	D	I	R
O	T	E	W	H	E	E	L	Y	R	R	A
N	O	S	N	U	D	E	E	D	A	W	N

a trifle ironical. Those who were fortunate enough to strike the right line found the going quite easy for the most part, but there were three special difficulties, and no competitor was successful in surmounting all. The gap between *stone* and *sang* was bridged by the aid of Shakespeare and Burns by SERMON; *October* ale was suggested by St. Dunstan's strange *vocative*, STRONG-BEERUM; and the connection between H. G.

Wells's 'Kipps' and a *numb skull* was supplied by the Australian club, WADDY (Kipps' father). The alternatives, GABY, SAPPY and BATTY, hardly do justice to Kipps; but, since the solution of Mr. A. C. Ruffhead (Harrow) was correct in every particular but this, he is awarded a prize.

'GRADATIM II': SOLUTION

STEPS.—Court, Plaster, Paris, Rome, 'the NIOBE of Nations' (*Childe Harold*, IV. 79), Stone (Niobe's fate), 'SERMONS in stones' (*As You Like It*), 'Perhaps it may turn out a SANG' (Burns, *To A Young Friend*), Azur, COTE, 'Buttut TOCE', Kipps, otherwise WADDY (a club), Numb skull, Costard, Costermonger, APOSTROPHE ARRY, *Vocative*, STRONGBEERUM (Ingoldsby, *Lay of St. Dunstan*), *October* (ale), March, DUN (trout fly), Sorrel, 'Sorrell AND SON' (Warwick Deeping), FILIOQUE, PROCESSION, BANNER, CENSOR, CRONE, WITCH, ENDOR (i Sam. xviii. 7), RODEN, 'Roden's CORNER' (Seton Merriman), PENALTY, CRIME, C.I.D., *Le Cid* (CORNEILLE), Crow, DAWN, ROSY-FINGERED, Chilblains, 'A.B.C.' liniment, CAB, JEHU, CHOUAN ('Companion of Jehu' Brewer), Owl, Sage, Magus, Star (Matt. ii.), SCREEN, RIDDLE, SPHINX, Egypt, Fellah, CHAL, G. H. Borrow, Steal, COP SBIRRO, Fascist club (cf. the *fascies* of the *lictor* and the American club), Unfriendly Society? FONE, Loud speaker, Stump, BOSTON (the famous tower), 'The HUB of the Solar System' (O. W. Holmes), WHEEL, Buddha, PALI, Pila (a mortar), Pestle, Knight (of the Burning Pestle), Pawn, Spout, RAIN, Rajah, GRANDIE, Spain, Castle, Bishop, ORD-i-NAND, L.Th., Free-thinker? REASON, CARD (*Essay on Man*, I. 107), Wool, Gathering, Pus(s), PUR, Lot (Esth. ix. 24), Salt (Gen. xix. 26), Guest, INN.

Shakespeare from Two Angles

Art and Artifice in Shakespeare. By Elmer Edgar Stoll. Cambridge University Press. 7s. 6d.

Shakespeare at Work: 1592—1603. By G. B. Harrison. Routledge. 10s. 6d.

THERE HAVE APPEARED at the same time two new studies of Shakespeare by an American and an English scholar. Both critics are accomplished in the technique of their craft; both combine learning with gifts of exposition. But their points of view and methods are curiously dissimilar. Professor Stoll concentrates his gaze on the plays and their audience. Dr. Harrison seeks to relate the work of Shakespeare to the events and activities of the period in which he lived.

It is a fitting tribute to so distinguished a 'foreigner' (to use his own term) as Professor Stoll that his book should be published by the Press of the University of Cambridge. He returns the compliment by declaring that it is 'on Shakespeare's own soil' that the dramatist has 'been more finely and sympathetically interpreted than anywhere else', though he is ready enough to challenge many of the interpretations. And Dr. Stoll is a doughty disputant. I have a vivid memory of him expounding some of his views at an Anglo-American Conference of Professors of English ten years ago in Columbia University, New York. He has an encyclopædic knowledge of dramatic literature from Æschylus to Eugene O'Neill. He knows too that the critic of drama must be versed in other forms of literature, and in an interesting chapter of his book he draws parallels from the epic and the novel. And his familiarity with the history of criticism would have satisfied even the late Professor Saintsbury. He prefaces his volume with a series of 'Dogmata Critica' which range from Aristotle and Longinus to Percy Lubbock and T. S. Eliot. Indeed Aristotle's famous saying in his *Poetics* that Plot is the first essential of Tragedy and that the Characters come second is the mainspring of Professor Stoll's criticism. As he puts it in the forefront of his treatise, 'the core of tragedy (and of comedy too, for that matter) is situation; and a situation is a character in contrast, and perhaps also in conflict, with other characters or with circumstances. . . . And the situation that [dramatists] have deemed to be best is that in which the contrast or conflict is sharpest and most striking, the probability or psychological reasonableness being a secondary consideration'. Hence the burden of this volume, as of Dr. Stoll's previous writings, is a sustained attack upon the 'psychological' and Romantic critics who have given primary importance to the characters in Shakespeare's plays, have treated them as if they were endowed with an independent life, and have been at pains to reconcile seeming contradictions in their portraiture. 'The play has been thought to be a psychological document, not primarily a play . . . and the characters have been taken for the separable copies of reality'. Dr. Stoll insists that they have no such 'reality', but that they belong to a world of artifice, of tragic illusion where their supreme justification is not to be self-consistent but to serve the purposes of the plot or 'situation'.

Dr. Stoll illustrates his thesis mainly from four of the tragedies, 'Othello', 'Hamlet', 'Macbeth' and 'King Lear'. The chapters on the two latter plays are, however, comparatively slight, and the disproportion of the treatment somewhat disturbs the artistic balance of the book. The chapter on 'Othello' is a remarkably subtle piece of pleading, but to me that on 'Hamlet' is of special interest. Dr. Stoll holds (as I do) that Shakespeare's play was founded on a lost 'revenge' tragedy by Thomas Kyd, that 'he heightened the suspense and mystery, imparted to the hero dignity, delicacy, and pathos, and threw the whole burden of motivation, or explanation, upon his self-reproaches'. But he proceeds, in accordance with his general theory, to maintain that Hamlet's self-reproaches 'are not meant to hurt him in our opinion, are merely to explain and justify the story'; and that Shakespeare could not have 'introduced so fundamental an innovation as, in the place of a popular heroic revenger, a procrastinator, lost in thought and weak of will'. He attributes the accepted view of Hamlet as a procrastinator to 'Scotch professors and sentimentalists, romantic poets and German philosophers and present-day psychologists and psychoanalysts, exploring their own consciousness in the study'. To Dr. Stoll the prince of Denmark is 'a lord of the Renaissance', who loves name and fame, and dies in the moment of his triumph. Even those who, like myself, find this a hard saying will recognise in Dr. Stoll a master of dialectical fence.

Dr. Harrison, as I have said, takes us into a strangely different atmosphere. He has just completed his notable achievement of compiling from contemporary sources three Elizabethan Journals ranging over the period from 1591 to 1603. His intimate knowledge of these dozen eventful years has inspired him

to trace Shakespeare's dramatic development through them and his reaction to the events of his time. Dr. Harrison, as he is justified in doing, paints with a broad brush and leaves us to judge of the results by ourselves. He unfolds before our eyes a moving panorama of the political, social, literary and theatrical 'happenings' of the closing Elizabethan epoch, with the somewhat paradoxical consequence that Shakespeare himself for considerable stretches of time disappears from Dr. Harrison's pages. But all that is said of contemporary playwrights is interesting, and the general sketch of Shakespeare's artistic development from the 'Henry VI' trilogy to 'Twelfth Night' is likely to find acceptance.

With Dr. Harrison's attitude towards the relation between Shakespeare and his environment I am, broadly speaking, in sympathy. The dramatist was *not*, in Matthew Arnold's words, 'self-school'd, self-scann'd'. It is well that we should be reminded, in reading the historical plays, of the war-clouds that were perpetually lowering over the European scene in the last decade of Elizabeth's reign and of the haunting problem of the succession to the throne. And in one of the most effective sections of his book Dr. Harrison seeks to show that the cynical handling of the romantic 'Troilus and Cressida' theme reflects the disillusioned and bitter record of Shakespeare's London at the close of 1600.

But when it comes to matters of detail one is more doubtful. The true story of the fatal affray between the two sets of brothers, Sir Charles and Sir Henry Danvers and Sir Walter and Henry Long, is exciting in itself. But did Shakespeare borrow from this for 'Romeo and Juliet', even though the Danvers party took refuge with the Earl of Southampton? And were the Sonnets addressed to Southampton and a dark-featured courtesan of Clerkenwell? Sir Edmund Chambers has recently put in a word for a reconsideration of the Pembroke theory. And, above all, did 'the disturbing personality' of the Earl of Essex exercise so dominating an influence over Shakespeare as Dr. Harrison and (as I have previously noted in THE LISTENER) Professor Dover Wilson would claim? Shakespeare's allusion to Essex in a chorus of 'Henry V' is familiar, and Chapman in dedicating to him the first part of his translation of the *Iliad* saluted him as Achilles. But did the dramatist have him in mind when he described Bolingbroke going into exile in 'Richard II'; and Hotspur gasconading about 'honour' in 'I Henry IV'; and Benedick in 'Much Ado' returning from a campaign wearing one of the great beards made fashionable by Essex after his successful expedition to Cadiz; and Laertes in 'Hamlet' breaking into the presence of King Claudius? These are among the many problems which will confront Dr. Harrison's readers. So stimulating a work could well have spared the publisher's exuberance on its jacket.

F. S. BOAS

Prelude

This image or another, this quick choosing
raindrop choosing a path through grains of sand
the blood-drop choosing its way, that the dead world
may wake and think or sleep and dream

This gesture or another, this quick action
the bough broken by the wind and flung down
the hand striking or touching, that the dead world
may know itself and forget itself

This memory or another, this brief picture
sunbeam on the shrivelled and frosted leaf
a world of selves trying to remember the self
before the idea of self is lost—

Walk with me world, upon my right hand walk,
speak to me babel, that I may strive to assemble
of all these syllables a single word
before the purpose of speech is gone.

CONRAD AIKEN

The Listener's Book Chronicle

The Unemployed Man. By E. Wight Bakke Nisbet. 10s. 6d.

IT IS STRANGE that the first study of the unemployed man's reactions to his sufferings in this country should come from an American source. Dr. Bakke, armed with a research fellowship from Yale University, settled down, on the advice of those conducting the *New Survey of London Life and Labour*, in Greenwich during 1931-32, and made a detailed investigation of the effects of the Unemployment Insurance system upon the willingness and ability of the worker to support himself. He based his study upon personal interviews with the unemployed, written records kept by the unemployed themselves, and social statistics of all kinds collected by public authorities or voluntary bodies. This study would be valuable enough even if it were strictly limited to its terms of reference; but in fact Dr. Bakke has gone a good deal beyond this limited field, and has thrown some light on the material and psychological consequences of unemployment, the same problem as that surveyed, from a different angle, in the 'Memoirs of the Unemployed' recently published in THE LISTENER. Particularly interesting are Dr. Bakke's observations on the effects of unemployment on home life; he points out that the home is the centre of the worker's morale, and that 'there is a fundamental difference between skilled and unskilled workmen with respect to incomes and surplus above basic needs, their means of building a home, and the kind of homes they live in'. Unemployment, he shows, is concentrated largely among those whose education does not go beyond the age limit for compulsory attendance. But it does not follow from this that the unemployed do not know how to make use of their enforced leisure; Dr. Bakke gained the impression that 'loafing' is not as prevalent as is supposed, and that most unemployed have not had their financial resources so reduced as to be completely cut off from simple and inexpensive forms of recreation, at the cinema, public house, sports ground, public library, and so forth. In religious outlook Dr. Bakke could not trace much difference between employed and unemployed; he found a general feeling that unemployment is an economic or social problem, and that religion has little or nothing to offer towards its solution. Nor could he find that unemployment had made any great difference in the political outlook of those affected—though he did not, apparently, have time to find out how far it tended to produce a state of apathy towards public affairs generally. The main conclusion which Dr. Bakke draws is a justification of Unemployment Insurance, as providing a basis of 'security', however modest, for the worker against the appalling fear of descent into pauperism. Unemployment Insurance, he says, 'has kept the working force at a higher level of efficiency than would have been possible without its help in similar conditions of trade'. In nearly all cases where he observed attempts on the part of the unemployed to obtain or retain benefit fraudulently, or where loafing was prevalent, the persons concerned were unskilled workers, since the normal life-conditions of skilled and semi-skilled workers are more conducive to independence and self-reliance. He acquits Unemployment Insurance of any charge that it has caused 'pauperisation', though it may have revealed and even supported some paupers. In general, he maintains that it is useless to plan social legislation on the assumption that it should stimulate individuals towards goals of riches, power or promotion (goals which in any case can be reached by few): 'the problem of social insurance is first of all to make more secure the happiness of the ordinary man, and to keep him from swelling the class of those who are misfits'.

The Avatars. By A.E. Macmillan. 6s.

This extraordinary book lies outside the regular canons of reviewing. To some readers it may well say nothing at all; others will find in it a revelation. One at any rate it has filled with an almost physical intoxication, upsetting balance of judgment and even preference. One might try to make a start by saying that the conversations between the characters are less interesting than the passages in which they are face to face with Nature, only to be pulled up by the realisation that these pages may have, for other readers, the same transforming power. Nor does the fable help. A young artist, stricken by a vision of the waste of life in the city, flees from civilisation to some place in the West where there are lakes and woods and mountains. He meets here an old friend and his wife and child, with friends of theirs, a poet, a sculptor, and others. He meets a mysterious boy upon the mountain. He has a picnic with Conaire's child upon the lake; and so on. The events in themselves sound trivial, and no summary can do other than misrepresent the loveliness and gay, spiritual vigour of the story.

Nothing is more difficult in the world of today than to keep innocence and freshness without appearing silly. Padraic Colum is one poet who can do it, and another is A. E., who has at the back of him years of organisation, of practical labour, and

of contact with every type of human being. His vision has been held and won in a lifetime of battle. It is not a retreat from, but a transfiguration of, experience. He sees the shape upon the mountain side the more clearly for having understood and frustrated the huckster in the market place. The descriptive writing in this book is of the rare kind which only comes when the artist's eye and the seer's imagination are at one. There is no space for adequate quotation, such as the marvellous description of the great American city, and no short extract can suggest the joyous, continuous pictures of light and water and sparkling air. 'When Paul awoke he felt inexpressibly young and happy as if he had been reborn and baptised with some glorious fire. His limbs were light to move, and his fancies like a gay multitude of fish, flying to and fro, sunlit in water'. And 'The sky leaning over the lofty crags was like a face all majesty of expression yet without features'. 'All the tapestry of the heavenly house hung and flamed overhead . . .'. The present reviewer is not an uncritical admirer of A. E.'s work. There are times when the seer in him loses touch with the artist, and the intellect has thought it impious to scrutinise what has appeared in vision. His best poems are magnificent, but he is emphatically a poet to be read in selection rather than in collection. Even so, *The Avatars* is one of the rare books that enrich our lives and make us thankful for the day we met them.

Literature in My Time. By Compton Mackenzie Rich and Cowan. 6s.

Mr. Compton Mackenzie himself supplies the best definition of this refreshing and candid commentary: he calls it a piece of *impressionistic criticism*. That is to say, he makes no pretence of an objective view of literature during the last fifty years, but sets down what it looked like to him—a method which has the merit of unusual stimulus and provocation. Mr. Mackenzie is particularly persuasive in his analysis of the influences and reactions which have moulded contemporary literature. He is excellent, for example, in his assessment of the decadent 'nineties, which he interprets as being mainly a revulsion from Victorian gentility and prudery; and he insists that the 'sentimentalising of sin' was a minor manifestation of that revulsion. The book is full of shrewd estimates—of Meredith's brief success, of Hardy's failure in everything but the functions of a rural annalist, of Galsworthy's second-hand synthesis of human nature—his characters were lay figures dressed up with all that he could learn from newspapers about the externals of contemporary manners'. Bennett is wittily appraised as the J. H. Thomas of Literature, and Wells is acknowledged as one of the most pervasive influences of his generation. Some of the most acute and controversial judgments of this survey are those on Lawrence, Joyce (whose *Ulysses* is called the one major achievement of the present transition), Huxley and T. S. Eliot; and Mr. Mackenzie's exposition of the sex-motive in the contemporary novel is sensible and convincing. Although some parts of this assessment are slight, notably those on poetry, yet the book as a whole is valuable and attractive. It is decidedly not a collection of *bons mots*; it is a serious piece of evaluation: and, although it is inevitably assailable in this instance or that, it will compel its readers to reconsider both their favourites and their antipathies.

Great Men of Science. By P. Lenard Bell. 12s. 6d.

A balanced estimate of the achievements of the great pioneers of science is best given by one who combines the competence of the professional historian with familiarity at first hand with scientific method. Since his retirement from research in atomic physics in Heidelberg Professor Lenard has qualified himself for this position by his devotion to a subject which engaged much of his attention in the height of his active career: the history of the men who have given us science. Who first showed the path here? What actually did he do? How was he led to do it? These questions and the like have driven the author not merely to study what historians have said of the pioneers, but to read as far as possible the original works of discovery themselves. The author has clearly taken immense pains with the collection of his material and in the expression of his judgments upon it. They may not always command assent, but they are honestly come by; they are entirely free from that scientific nationalism which has shown itself oftenest in the past in France, and which in times like the present is pardonable in Germany. The sixty-five studies in the book are, as the title states, all of men; they begin with Pythagoras and Euclid and end with Hertz and Hasenöhrl. No survivor of the Great War except Crookes and van't Hoff (whose work was essentially complete before 1914) is included. The author had to stop somewhere and there are fair reasons for this course, but a consequence is that almost nothing is said of the renaissance in physics associated with Röntgen, J. J. Thomson, Rutherford, the Curies, the Braggs, and Lenard himself. The author, it is obvious, likes his science

'pure'; he purposely excludes from his list of honour the applied scientists—the technologists, the engineers, the doctors. He is not deceived by the witchery of the modern mathematicians into thinking them scientists. Science, for him, are the fundamental sciences: physics and chemistry.

The biographies are brief and to the point; but the absence of gossip, of humour, of a light touch anywhere, makes some of the stories rather sad reading. The author has none of the graces of a novelist; what he says is relevant, penetrating, accurate and sometimes pungent, but no more; no diagrams, no formulae. The book, moreover, is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of the translation. It is done at times so literally that the reader who knows German cannot interpret the English without a grin. The biographies vary in length from half a page or so at the beginning to 29 pages on Newton, averaging 5 or 6 pages. In a few cases a group of men are wisely described together, for example: Toricelli and Pascal, Boyle and Mariotte, Galvani and Volta. There are 62 excellent illustrations, all portraits; they make a fine showing. There is a lovely portrait of Linnaeus; Faraday appears with a magnet poised in his hand like a gigantic cigar; Bunsen's portrait might have been done by Manet during his Monet period; Ohm's is about the only unexpected picture. There is a sneaking, furtive look about him which is completely at variance with the man himself. On the whole they are a fine-looking lot; it may be added without cant that there was a moral beauty about them as a whole which is exceptional. They were, as a fact, above the common run of humanity outside of their science. They had widely different dispositions; they were beset with the most diverse circumstances, but they were kin in sharing in common the selfless search after truth. The more fundamental the science, the greater is the importance of the discovery of what is new, and the less is the likelihood that it will be made except by one individual at his best. As Professor Lenard says: 'We see quite clearly that great advances only come from single personalities and not from societies, no matter how excellent the persons may in general be of which they are composed. Such societies should therefore see their province exclusively in protecting and forwarding the work of the single and all too rare individuals who show themselves to be bringers of progress in any direction'. The rare individual! It is to him we must always look in science—and in most things.

World Panorama: 1918-1933. By George Seldes Hamish Hamilton. 12s. 6d.

How often, in these difficult days, does one hear the comment 'At any rate it's an interesting time to live through'. And this book, written by a well-known American journalist, gives point enough to the observation. So intensely have we lived during the last fifteen or twenty years that the mind can scarcely contain a fraction of the impressions which it has received. In the twinkling of an eye politics become history, and history itself fades into the dim and nebulous background of legend. Who, or what, was Bela Kun? Was Rosa Luxembourg a film star or a communist? Was Matteotti a politician or an Italian liqueur? These and similar questions ought to have some meaning for us, who have lived through so many revolutions and seen so many wars. (In 1922, Mr. Seldes reminds us, there were twenty-three wars proceeding in various parts of the world.) Mr. Seldes answers them all. It is very entertaining. Mr. Seldes uses for his panorama the news-reel technique which was used with such brilliant effect in F. L. Allen's survey of recent American history, *Only Yesterday*. He is not quite so successful. There is, perhaps, less of comedy and more of tragedy in the world as a whole than in the United States. Anyway, Mr. Seldes had a more difficult job on his hands; it is easier to make a film of a continent than of a world. And he performs it, making the due allowances, quite brilliantly. To read *World Panorama* is like sitting in a news theatre while the events, not of the week but of the decade, of the generation, flicker before one's passive eyes. Here they come. Wilson, all teeth and eyeglasses; that funny little man, like a malicious *niebelung*, must be Clemenceau; Battling Siki, Pilsudski, Freud, Hitler, Ponzi, Landru, Mussolini—everybody's there. Locarno follows the Peace Conference, and the Wall Street crash succeeds Locarno. Never was history so easily presented, or so easily absorbed. It is difficult to put the book down.

But of course it is not history. Mr. Seldes, who seems to have some sense of humour, would scarcely pretend to be a critical historian. And sometimes his technique betrays him. The historical film is always apt to get its perspectives mixed; and Mr. Seldes' treatment of the war in Anatolia, for instance, suggests even to a careful reader that the campaign was a matter of a few hectic weeks rather than many weary months; and that Smyrna was burned in the autumn of 1921 instead of a year later. Like the film itself, Mr. Seldes tends towards oversimplification: political unrest in India does not date from Amritsar, and Gandhi cannot be described accurately, even in 1919, as 'a certain unimportant agitator, a certain Mr. Gandhi'. Like nearly all Americans, Mr. Seldes is quite incapable of understanding either the history or the function of Unemployment Insurance in this country: one would suppose that it was

improvised suddenly, two or three years ago, in an effort to save the pound. And sometimes his satire is too obvious, and too strained, to be effective. But with all its defects, *World Panorama: 1918-1933* is an unusually absorbing production. Not to enjoy it one would have to be very dull or very learned—or perhaps both.

Thirty Preliminary Poems. By George Barker Parton Press. 2s. 6d.

The title of this collection of lyrics and sonnets seems to suggest that Mr. Barker is quite aware that he has not yet achieved, in his poetry, the continuous individuality towards which all true poets must evolve. This does not mean that these poems are either imitative or damagingly uncertain: it simply means that as yet Mr. Barker lacks that unerring drive of vision which is the poet's lasting foundation. Magic he certainly has—a quality which alone would be sufficient to place him high among the younger modern poets. And he has an emotional intensity which again is rare among his contemporaries. If he reveals an affinity with any other poet it is with Mr. Stephen Spender, in whom this same combination of word-magic and emotional intensity is evident in a degree quite unusual today. (Mr. Barker would also seem to possess a wise understanding of D. H. Lawrence.) But such a poem as the 'Ode' which was recently printed in this paper is indebted to nobody and it probably indicates, more than any other poem in the collection, the way Mr. Barker is travelling: it is simple, passionate, individual and melodious, a poem which should surely be included in any anthology really representative of the best poetic work now being done. Other poems approach the 'Ode' in sureness; but too often the poet obscures his undoubted genius (the word is purposely used) in a display of intellectual pyrotechnics. Such experiments as:

Beyond this being I and being not that mind
That blind to its kind finds in the divine its mind,
Being but I, I cry to these signs I am confined
May vainly try to divine deeper the upward mine
Driven through abysmal heaven, but having yet to die

Deaf dumb and blind can only stare at the sky—

—instead of releasing the emotion that should give wings to the poem, merely succeed in tethering it obstinately to earth. It must not be supposed, however, that such displays of technical efficiency are by any means the predominant feature of this book; nor do we wish to suggest that their appearance is an indication that Mr. Barker has gone into print too soon: they have obviously been vital to the poet's growth (by putting a brake on any tendency to facility, by enabling him to hammer out his own particular style, and by finally strengthening the sinews of his later work) and they are not unimportant to our own appreciation of his powers. Nevertheless, if such lines as:

Return from the West
Our hour is come,
Release the squirrel from its frozen nest,
The worm from solid mould,
Cremate to comfortable dust
Our old, and immediately reduce
The icy fortifications of our adversary;
Dissolve with lightning the imprisoning cold:
Arm with miraculous beams our youth
Clothed in the habiliments of your warmth,
And resuscitate all fiery spirits from their death—

—taken from the 'Ode', are really, as we suppose, indicative of the measure of Mr. Barker's latest achievement, we cannot help looking forward even more enthusiastically to his next book. Good poets are rare enough today and he is certainly one of them.

One Man's India. By T. Earle Welby Lovat Dickson. 6s.

Much has been written about the late Mr. Earle Welby's qualities as critic, but not enough to do them full justice. If Welby has not received full recognition as critic it appears certain that he did not have time to do himself justice as an interpreter of the Eastern mind to Western peoples. Brought up to speak the vernacular, and encouraged to absorb all that was best in Hindu and Muhammadan culture, he spent the greater part of his adult life in Indian journalism. It is quite obvious, from this posthumous volume, that Welby not only knew but 'felt' India, and for this reason had the confidence of the people. He communicates that feeling to us with a nicety of language, and a perception of us and India, which is extremely rare in books on that continent. *One Man's India* is a noble fragment, an unfinished revelation, and we can ill afford to lose what would have been written had the author lived. In his interpretation of India Welby also shows himself, and it is a lovable personality that emerges. The stories which he tells are superbly told, and his descriptions of scenes which the ordinary traveller does not visit are delicious. The book, which is admirably introduced by Mr. Gerald Barry, is illustrated with a number of drawings.

New Novels

Miracle on Sinai. By Osbert Sitwell. Duckworth. 7s. 6d.

Solal of the Solals. By Albert Cohen. Translated by Wilfred Benson. Putnam. 7s. 6d.

Escape to Life. By Ferenc Kőrmendy. Chapman and Hall. 7s. 6d.

Reviewed by EDWIN MUIR

THE first two books in this list are fantasies, the one with a satirical intention, the other apparently with a mystical one. Mr. Sitwell's story is very much the better of the two, being, unlike the second, exact in its terms of reference and logically developed. Yet in spite of its many virtues it fails at the point where success was essential. It is the story of a miracle which was revealed on the top of Mount Sinai to a representative collection of successful people, most of them 'great' in the newspaper sense, including a newspaper proprietor, a Jewish financier, a broad-minded bishop, a pure but shocking novelist, a woman medium, two cinema stars—one male and one female—an Anglo-Indian general, a wealthy Bolshevik and a sheik. There are also, to offset these, a number of more obscure and less worthless persons: an aged palæontologist, a pious Roman Catholic priest, an amiably conceited museum official, a governess, a lady's maid, a nurse, and a Bolshevik valet. These characters are convincingly and amusingly drawn and selected with a fine sense of their satirical value; but the miracle itself is somewhat forced and pointless. Lord Pridian, the newspaper proprietor, takes his menagerie of hangers-on for a picnic to the top of the sacred hill, where they become aware of a curiously bright cloud. While they are resting after lunch the air darkens, the cloud envelopes them, the mount trembles with a noise of thunder, a blinding light appears, and two blocks of stone covered with inscriptions are left behind as the result of the convulsion. After glancing hurriedly and fearfully at these strange manuscripts, the party hurry down the mountain again with awed but on the whole pleasurable feelings, for each of them has read on the stones exactly what he wanted to read and is thus divinely confirmed in his prejudices. Next day, while they are all waiting for the tables of the new law to be brought down to the hotel on a motor lorry, acrimonious disputes break out. This scene should be a promising comedy of cross-purposes, but it miscarries. The idea is too simple; we grasp it before Mr. Sitwell springs it, with too elaborate skill, upon us; we know the answer to the riddle while the characters are still in the dark. They are busy quarrelling when the sheik, who had also read the stones, confronts them with a force of armed Arabs and gives them the choice of either acknowledging Allah to be the only true God or dying within twenty-four hours. Most of them choose the latter alternative. The news reaches England; England sends out a fleet of aeroplanes to bomb Jerusalem, Mecca and various other celebrated cities, reducing them to ruins, and a world war breaks out. That Mr. Sitwell intends us to draw some satirical conclusion from this fantasy is obvious; but it is hard to tell what it can be except the general one that everybody reads what he wants to read from experience; and surely that did not justify such an artificial and improbable fable. In any case the first half of the book, in which he introduces the characters with admirable wit and sets them going in the most natural way, is itself sufficient to point this lesson; and all that the supposed miracle does, when it is carefully sprung on us, is to confirm what we knew already. So the miracle itself, for which all the rest is a preparation, gives an impression of being both unnecessary and pointless.

Mr. Sitwell has not solved another problem either; it is one that applies not only to his own story but to all stories which point a real moral by inventing an artificial hypothesis. What reality, and what kind of reality, are we supposed to allow to such inventions? The author must make us accept them for the time being, so he must make them imaginatively convincing; but at the same time he must give them no more reality than that of a hypothesis, and so they must not be convincing in the same way as the other events he describes. Mr. Sitwell seems to oscillate between these two dangers. He describes the miracle realistically, trying to render it credible by an accumulation of detail: an impressive but misdirected performance, for part of the point consists in the miracle's not being real at all. Besides this, his description has one unavoidable fault as compared with that of the Biblical historian: that he does not believe in what he describes and his predecessor did. These various unresolved problems throw the story out of proportion.

It raises another question as well. T. L. Enfelon, the prophetic novelist, has so many of D. H. Lawrence's qualities that one cannot help accepting him as an imaginary portrait. The portrait is semi-satirical like all the others in the book, except that of the Roman Catholic priest; but it is on the whole sympathetic and even generous at the same time. No doubt, too,

a liberal application of satire to certain of Lawrence's theories is desirable at present; the uncritical acceptance of them only helps to obscure his genius. Mr. Sitwell can also claim the sanction of usage, for it is a common thing at present to include in works of fiction more or less thinly disguised public figures. But a novelist who does so surely takes an unfair advantage. He can invent his character's sentiments at will and in doing so make them ridiculous without further trouble. And though the figure he sets up may be made of the very best straw, though one may admire the quality of the material and acknowledge its genuine excellence, after contemplating it one cannot help reflecting that a single satirical observation on the original of the figure which could be checked, agreed with or disagreed with, would be infinitely more valuable and to the point. In spite of these faults, however, the book is a brilliant one. The vigorous ornateness of the style, its prodigality in exact ornament, makes it a continuous intellectual pleasure to read. The wit is delightful in itself, the satire penetrating, and, though the whole lacks proportion and unity, enough pleasure may be had from the separate parts to make them well worth reading.

Solal of the Solals is a fantastic novel which, on the evidence of the dust-coat, has been praised to the skies in all the leading countries in Europe. From Mr. Benson's translation from the French, which has all the signs of being an excellent one, it is difficult to understand why. There are some fine comic scenes in the book, a great deal of rant, a flavouring of false mysticism, and a facile pastiche of various styles, including those of Rabelais, Rimbaud, Giraudoux and Mr. James Joyce. The story relates the incredible adventures of a beautiful Jewish boy from his childhood in the Greek island of Cephalonia to his suicide and resurrection in Geneva. He runs away at sixteen with a French woman ten years older than himself, goes through extraordinary hardships and achieves astonishing successes, eventually marrying a rich and beautiful woman and becoming a leading figure in the French socialist movement: all while he is still in his twenties. At the height of his fame he discovers that his attachment to his race is stronger than his lust for power, which he accordingly renounces; a long and inarticulate struggle with his wife begins; she leaves him at last; he takes his life and rises again from the dead. The story is obviously intended to be a parable, but it is so strained and affected, and gives such a display of misplaced ingenuity, that one cannot tell sometimes whether the author is weeping with pity for his hero's misfortunes or with admiration for his own virtuosity. His most genuine gift is an extravagant humour, and his descriptions of *Solal's* charming and unrepresentable crowd of relatives, old Saltiel, Solomon, Ironmaw and the rest, are delightfully vigorous and free. But *Solal* himself is unreal; the serious passages are jauntily sentimental; the temper of the whole not so much extravagant as melodramatic. The author's considerable powers of invention are employed to astonish rather than convince, and one's capacity for astonishment, if played on constantly, tends to tire. But if the story had sustained throughout the rapidity and spirit of the comic scenes in the beginning it would have been truly remarkable.

Escape to Life won an international novel competition sponsored by the English publishers and Messrs. William Morrow and Company of New York. 'It was selected from a very large number of competing manuscripts by a strong committee of judges' the wrapper announces, 'who declared it to be a "most remarkable" production, "alive and written in a key of grim humour", "full of action" and possessing the qualities of a "best seller"'. It has subsequently had an 'amazing success', it appears, in Hungary, Germany, Sweden, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Denmark and Holland. It is in reality a very competent and honest and occasionally powerful example of the novel of post-War disillusionment. The scene is laid mainly in Budapest; the chief character is a successful man who on his return there from conquests in other countries is sponged on by old school friends, who hope to get something out of him. On its modest level the story is honest and moving, but it shows little evidence of sensitivity. The translator, who seems to be workmanlike and American, is anonymous.

Mr. Muir also recommends: *Ida Elisabeth*, by Sigrid Undset (Cassell); *Seven Yesterdays*, by Paul Hoffman (Hamish Hamilton); *Farewell Victoria*, by T. H. White (Collins); and *Mr. Thompson in the Attic*, by Anna Gordon Keown (Peter Davies)—the first 8s. 6d., the others 7s. 6d.